



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

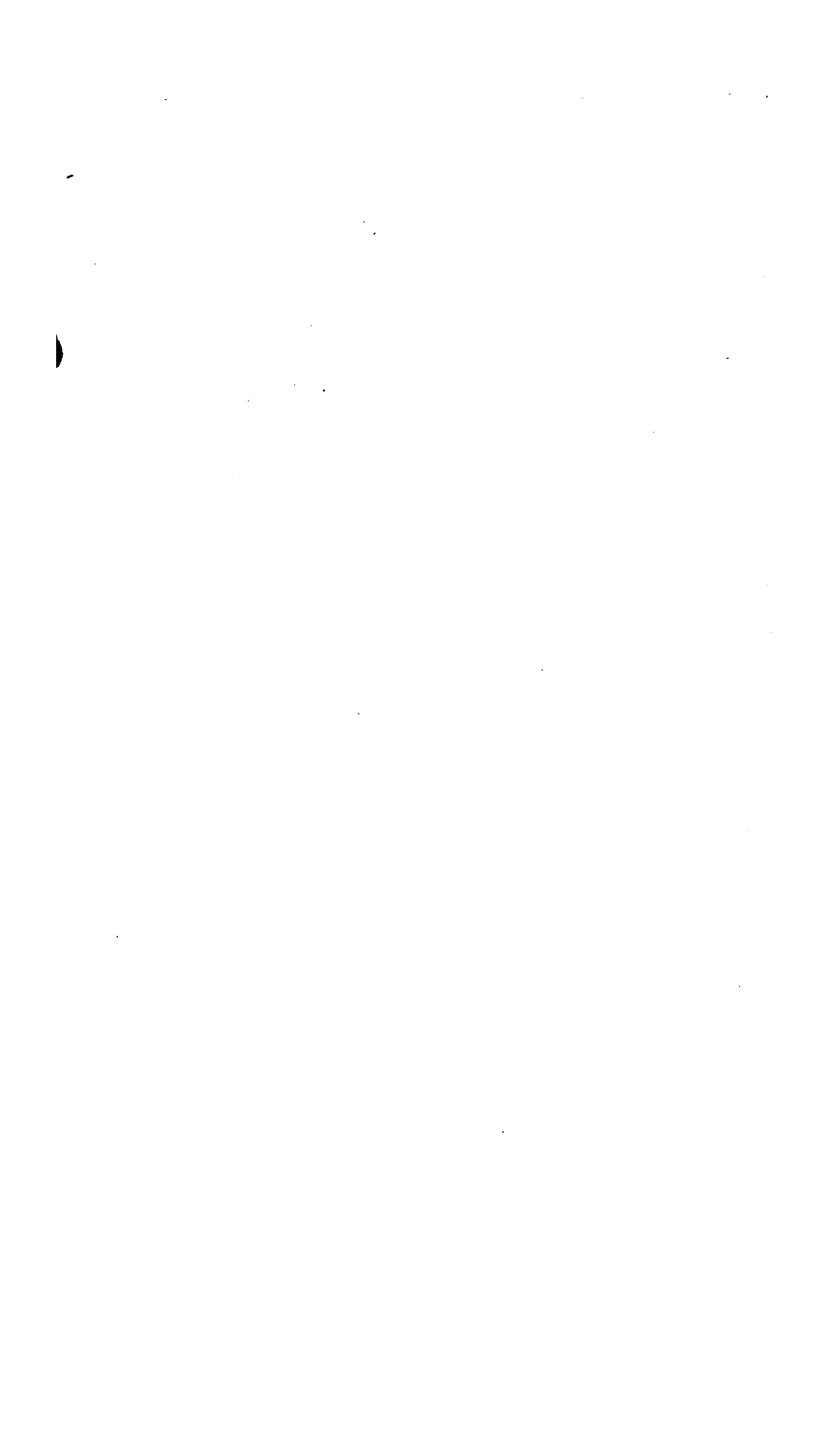
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07491147 4



NOV
SMITH





C E L E S T I N A.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

██████████

[The remainder of the page contains extremely faint and illegible text, appearing to be a list or series of entries. The characters are too light to transcribe accurately.]

CELESTINA.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND,
M.DCC.XCI.

30
NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
958566A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
E 1935 L

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

CELESTINA.

CHAPTER I.

THE reflections of Celestina when she was alone were full of bitterness and anguish. It was in vain that she wearied herself with conjectures on the cause of her misfortune: she could find no probability in any that presented themselves. It could not be caprice, nor that cruel delight which men have sometimes taken in wantonly inflicting pain, and torturing by disappointment the hearts they have taught to love them, for of such conduct she knew Willoughby to be incapable; it could not be a dispute with Vavasour or

VOL. II.

B

any

any other young man, for such, however alarming, must soon have been decided : nor could it be any pecuniary difficulty that had thus divided them, since Willoughby, in talking over their future prospects, had related to her the situation of his fortune with the utmost clearness and precision; it could hardly be a prior matrimonial engagement, for from his infancy he had loved her, he had repeatedly told her that he never had the least partiality for any other woman, and he was truth and candour itself; it could not be any impediment raised by the Castlenorths, for however great might be their displeasure and disappointment, they had no power over Willoughby's actions, and he did not love them well enough to make it probable that their persuasions or remonstrances could induce him to give up the favourite project of his life, and abandon her, whom he so passionately loved, to disgrace and misery.

Whatever

Whatever was the cause, however, of the sudden resolution he had taken, misery was certain : she observed that in the dialogue which Cathcart repeated as having passed between him and Willoughby, no mention was made of a probability of his return—no hope thrown out, that their union was rather suspended than put an end to. All was dark and comfortless ; and in the mystery which surrounded the whole affair, there was something of terror and apprehension which seemed more insupportable than the certainty of any evil except Willoughby's death.

Cathcart, however, had given her a motive to support her courage, in telling her that nothing but the knowledge of her bearing his loss without injury to her health or her affection for him, could soothe or diminish the anguish with which Willoughby was himself oppressed. " Let me endeavour then," said she, " to give him this satisfaction, as the last proof I shall perhaps ever be able to give him of

my tender, my unalterable love. Condemned as I am to everlasting regret, dashed from the summit of happiness to long and hopeless sorrow for the rest of my life, let my resolution in suffering with calmness shew that I should have deserved the happiness which heaven once seemed to have settled as my lot. Heaven only knows wherefore I am condemned to lose and lament it."

The solemn promise which Willoughby had owned his mother had asked and received of him in her last moments now occurred to her. "Perhaps it is for the intended breach of that promise," cried she, "that we are punished: yet from whence? the ear that heard it, the anxious maternal heart that obtained it, are dust! My benefactress comes not from the grave to claim it: it was known only to her, to her son, and to me. Who is there who could enforce it now, and to whom would Willoughby listen, after obviating
all

all the objections I urged against its violation?"

This fatal promise, however, had always hung heavy on the heart of Celestina, even in her happiest moments, and she seemed now to be paying the price of having ever consented to break it. Still, still the inexplicable mystery remained; and the hand from which the blow came that had divided her and Willoughby was equally hid in obscurity.

When a misfortune, however heavy, is certain, the mind sinks restless beneath it; and feeling all remedy ineffectual, it ceases all attempt to apply any: but this was not the case with Celestina; while the cause of her being torn from Willoughby was unknown, there appeared a possibility that it might be removed; and though he had held out no such hope in his conversation with Cathcart, her reason now seized this idea as her only resource. He had besought her to bear their separation with patience; he had hopes then surely that it

B. 3.

would:

would end : he had entreated her not to forget her affection for him ; surely he had expectations then that he might again claim it. Her sanguine temper encouraged these faint rays of comfort, which a few moments before seemed to be extinguished for ever. The first shock was passed ; the tears she had shed had relieved her overburthened heart, and she prepared with some degree of serenity to go down to Mr. Thorold, Cathcart, and Jessy, and to consult with them on what she ought to do.

When she again entered the room, the little groupe which were assembled in it, their melancholy and anxious looks, and the different expectations with which their meeting had been appointed, combined to affect her, and to shake the little resolution she had with so much difficulty acquired : she sat down, however, and Mr. Thorold, with a degree of fatherly tenderness, approached her and took her hand.

“ My dear young friend,” said the excellent man, “ this dignified composure is
worthy

worthy of your excellent understanding. Do you think me deserving the honour of being your adviser, if, in the present state of circumstances, you feel that you want one?"

"I do indeed severely feel," replied Celestina faltering, "the necessity of a friend who is able to advise me; and where, dear Sir, can I find one so equal to it, if you will but undertake the trouble."

"Well then," replied Mr. Thorold, "we will not go over the occurrences that have happened, nor attempt to account for them: some unforeseen events have divided you and my friend Willoughby, and I am very sure, that whatever they are, they must, if irretrievable, embitter the rest of his life: he wishes you, as I understand from Mr. Cathcart, to remain here at least till you have letters from him. Do you intend to do so?"

"I hardly know," answered Celestina faintly, "what I ought to do."

“It seems to me,” said Mr. Thorold, “that whatever reason has had so much influence on him as to compel him to quit you, should render your abode in his house improper,”

“I will return then, sir, since that is your opinion, to the lodging I left at Thorpe Heath.”

“That will be very melancholy and unpleasant to you I fear.”

“It certainly will: but what have I to do now but to learn to suffer? Local circumstances will have little power to add to the sorrow I must endure, while uncertain of what is become of Mr. Willoughby: doubting whether I may not have been the cause that some evil has befallen him, and sure of nothing—but that I must be wretched if I never see him again.”

“I would very fain comfort without deceiving you if I could. *I hope you will see him again*: yet nothing surely but some very extraordinary event could have taken him from you; but you hear that he was well—

well—that he promised to write to you : it is possible that letter may explain what all our conjectures can do little in clearing up ; let us leave them, therefore, and do you, my dear Miss de Mornay, resolve to fulfil his parting injunctions as far as prudence will permit. I cannot say I approve of your staying here, or of your going back to indulge your uneasiness in the mournful seclusion of your cottage ; let me propose therefore a middle way, by which you will receive this expected letter without quitting the neighbourhood, and be ready to obey any wish of our dear Willoughby, without receiving it at Thorpe Heath, where you would have nobody to assist you in it's execution. Will you go home with me ?”

Celestina, who already felt the value of such a friend as she seemed to have acquired in Mr. Thorold, and who foresaw that she must lose Jessy, who could not stay long from her grandfather, would willingly have embraced this offer. She knew

that Willoughby had the warmest friendship for Mr. Thorold, and that he would probably approve of such a proposal; but she was unacquainted with his wife, and dreaded to intrude herself into a family where she might find only the master of it disposed to receive her: she objected therefore to the trouble she should give, and to the impropriety of introducing herself, thus unasked, to the acquaintance of his lady; but Mr. Thorold obviated all her objections, assured her she should have an apartment to herself, and that his wife would consider her as his daughter, his daughter as her sister; and Celestina, who could not think without pain of going alone to Thorpe Heath, which she had left with prospects so very different, and from whence her books and cloaths had been removed, consented to go with Mr. Thorold, and to remain with him at least till she heard from Willoughby.

It was then settled that at least part of the original errand which had brought Mr. Thorold

Thorold to Alvestone should be completed, and that Cathcart and Jessy should be married, since her father was already waiting to give her away, and since Cathcart was to remain at Alvestone by the particular directions of Willoughby on their parting. Celestina could not be present at the ceremony, but while it was performing prepared herself with as much resolution as she could for her little journey. When they returned from the altar, she kissed in silence the weeping Jessy, who clung round her unable to bid her adieu: she recommended to Cathcart the closest adherence to every injunction laid on him by Willoughby, and besought him to come himself over to her with the expected letter as soon as it arrived; and then with faltering steps went to the chaise which was waiting for her by Mr. Thorold's orders. He placed himself by her; and she was thus removed, probably as she thought for ever, from the house, of which, only a few

hours before, she considered herself as the fortunate mistress.

As she passed along the avenue, the bench under one of the great elms, where she had so often sat with Willoughby in their childhood, and where only a few days before he had been recalling those delightful times to her recollection, struck her most : it looked like a monument to the memory of lost happiness ! As the great gate of the park shut after the carriage, she felt exiled for ever from the only spot in the world that contained any object interesting to her ; and though little disposed to think of poetry, almost involuntarily repeated—

- “ O unexpected stroke, worse than of death,
“ Must I then leave thee paradise ? thus leave
“ Thee native soil, these happy walks and shades !”

Mr. Thorold, to whom sorrow was feared, attempted not to call off her thoughts from their present mournful employment ; but glad to see that her sorrow broke not
out

out in those violent and convulsive expressions which many women would have given way to, he contented himself with administering to her in silence all the offices of friendship; and when they arrived at his house, which was about five miles from Alvestone, he got out and went in first to prepare his family for the reception of their unexpected visitor. After a few moments he returned, and assured her that both Mrs. Thorold and his daughter would be happy to see her, and think themselves honoured by her abode with them; "but," added he, "perhaps you had rather go to your own chamber than be introduced immediately to strangers." Celestina had already repented of having accepted Mr. Thorold's offer, however friendly it was, and felt that in her present state of mind the most forlorn solitude would have been better for her than the restraint she must unavoidably submit to, and the enquiries that, if not by words, the looks of all who saw her would make into

into the cause of the strange revolution that had happened in her circumstances: but it was now too late to retreat, and she determined to go through at once a ceremony, the delay of which would not render it less distressing.

She answered, therefore, with more steadiness of voice than could be expected, that she could not too soon avail herself of Mrs. Thorold's kindness, and was immediately introduced to her and her only unmarried daughter.

Mrs. Thorold was what the world agrees to call a very good sort of woman, but one of those who are best described by negatives; she had no positive failings, but a sort of feminine pride, which made her very anxious that none of her neighbours, at least none of the rank of private gentlewomen, should have handsomer cloaths, or better furniture, or a nicer house; and while she carefully guarded her own dignity, she indulged somewhat too much curiosity in enquiring into the minutest particular;

ticular by which the consequence of others could be diminished or encreased.

Mr. Thorold, whose strong understanding taught him to see and bear her foibles, had taken the utmost pains to check in his daughters a propensity to imitate them. The three elder had been married some years, and were settled in the neighbourhood of London. Arabella, the youngest, was now about two and twenty, rather pretty in her person, and pleasing in her manners: with much of her father's sense; she had a little of the vanity of her mother; but it had taken another turn: though she dressed fashionably, and her sisters always took care, by sending her the newest modes from London, to enable her to give the *ton* in that remote country, she piqued herself less on that advantage than on being reckoned extremely accomplished. In consequence of this rage, she played on several kinds of instruments mechanically; for she had no ear, and sung in a feigned voice, for nature had denied her a natural

one.

one. In languages she was more successful: under the instructions of her father she had early been taught Latin, and that knowledge facilitated her acquiring the French and Italian, which she wrote and understood better than she spoke them: she took likenesses in crayons; painted landscapes in oil; and the apartments were furnished with her worsted works and embroidery.

Celestina had hardly gone through the first ceremonies of her reception than she found a relief from the inquisitive looks of the mother and daughter, in admiring these performances. "You do my trifling productions a great deal of honour," said Miss Thorold, "and your praise cannot fail of being very gratifying to me, as I understand you are yourself so extremely accomplished."

"Indeed," answered Celestina, "you have been misinformed. I can boast of no such advantage: but I am extremely fond of music and of drawing, and used to please

please a very partial friend by attempting them: since her death, my time has passed in a very unsettled way, and I have now no motive to tempt me to recover what in that desultory life I have lost of the little I knew."

Miss Thorold, who had heard Celestina represented as excelling, was not sorry to find she possessed no such very great advantages over her; and Celestina, to whom any thing was preferable to conversation, pressing her to sit down to the harpsichord, she complied with that air of confidence which the certainty of excelling gives; and till dinner she continued to play sonatas and lessons, all of which Celestina failed not to applaud, though she had so little idea of what she heard, that she could not have assigned one to it's proper composer: her thoughts were fled after Willoughby; and from the strange reverse she had experienced, nothing had power to detach them. Dinner, tea, and supper, at length were over; the presence of Mr. Thorold prevented

prevented his wife from asking questions which were every moment rising to her lips; and Celestina was permitted to retire to her own room at an early hour. The extreme fatigue she had suffered the night before, and the solicitude of spirit she had endured for so many hours, had so exhausted nature that she sunk into slumber; but it was disturbed and broken by hideous dreams. In the morning, however, she found herself better: her mind had not yet recovered from its consternation, but she could now think of all that had happened with more steadiness. In the letter she expected from Willoughby, she had something to look forward to, which might alleviate but could not encrease her anxiety, as whatever cleared up the mystery would, she thought, be a relief to her, and certainty, however painful, she was sure she could endure better than wild conjectures and terrifying suspense.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

ALL the following day passed without any tidings of Cathcart, in search of whom the anxious eyes of Celestina were continually turned towards the window. Mr. Thorold went out to his farm and among his parishioners in his usual way, and had charged his wife to let Celestina be mistress of her time, and not to importune her with questions or even with conversation: to Arabella also he had given the same injunctions: but the native politeness of Celestina had made both the ladies believe she was pleased by their conversation and interested in their concerns, and to avoid the appearance of rudeness or singularity, Celestina now forced herself into some degree of attention

tion to their endeavours to entertain her, listened to the details Mrs. Thorold gave of the affairs of the neighbourhood, and gave her daughter her opinion of the most elegant mixture of colours in a work-bag she was composing for one of her sisters, heard with patient politeness a long poem, written by young Thorold, who was now at Oxford, and assented to the justice of Arabella's complaints that there was very little rational society in the country, that every body now forsook their distant seats to pass their summers at some watering place, and that unless one could enter into the amusements of an inferior circle, there was to be found in the country no amusement at all.

So passed the long long day, and another and another in the same manner, relieved by nothing but the silent though tender sympathy with which Mr. Thorold himself seemed to enter into the feelings of his fair, unhappy guest. He looked at her with eyes that told her all the concern
her

her situation gave him; and appeared hurt that both his wife and daughter, though they behaved to her with all the attention and kindness possible, seemed not to understand, that on a mind like hers, in its present situation, the common occurrences of life could not be obtruded but to pain and fatigue. He however spoke not to them, of what, he feared, they had not delicacy of feeling enough to comprehend; but knowing of the expected letter from Willoughby, he became towards the noon of the fourth day almost as anxious for its arrival, and almost as uneasy at its long delay, as Celestina herself.

Her solicitude was by that time become insupportable. She could no longer conceal it under the appearance of attending to her hosts; but took the opportunity of Mrs. Thorold's being engaged in domestic business, and Arabella at her music, to steal into the garden; where she hid herself in a sort of alcove cut in an hedge of holly and other evergreens that bounded the
garden

garden towards the road, and there gave way to the tormenting apprehensions that corroded her heart. It was now Tuesday: Willoughby had been gone since the preceding Wednesday evening; and had he gone to London immediately, and written from thence as he promised, the letter must long since have reached Cathcart by the return of the post: but she knew that unless he was greatly changed it was not to the post he would entrust the conveyance of a letter on which her existence perhaps depended; the delay therefore aggravated all the terrors she felt; but another day past, and she was still obliged to endure them. To disguise her distress however was impracticable; and without hoping to impose upon her friends by so common an artifice, she was at length compelled to say, that she had an head-ach which was very severe unless when she was in the open air; and that she was rendered by it quite incapable of conversation.

Having

Having thus obtained the liberty of wandering alone in the garden, she passed there the whole morning of Wednesday: sometimes reflecting with the bitterest regret on the different prospects which were before her on the Wednesday of the preceding week, and sometimes bewildering herself in conjectures, on the cause of their having thus vanished from her.

Spring had within that period made a rapid progress; but Celestina no longer heeded the beauties that surrounded her; her's was now that state of mind when—

“ 'Tis nought but gloom around; the darken'd Sun
 “ Loses his light; the rosy-bosom'd Spring
 “ To weeping Fancy pines, and yon bright arch,
 “ Contracted, bends into a dusky vault:—
 “ All Nature fades extinct——”*

Even flowers, of which she was passionately fond, had lost the influence they once had over her fancy. She saw them not; perceiving them, only recollected that Wil-

* Thomson.

loughby

loughby had shewn her at Alvestone a bed of such hyacinths, whose bloom and fragrance he had fondly anticipated, knowing how much she delighted in them: she remembered with a sigh each particular leaf and blossom that composed the last nosegay he gathered for her, on the morning of that day, when they were divided, never, as she now feared—to meet again!

Such were her sad recollections, as, hardly knowing what she did, she traversed the grass walk which was divided by a hedge of evergreens from the road. Her mournful reverie was interrupted by the sound of horses feet. She flew to the gate: it was Cathcart! who on perceiving her threw himself from his horse and gave her the long expected letter, which she received with such marks of extreme agitation, that Cathcart, afraid she would fall, left his horse to find it's way to the stable, and came to support her.

She leaned on his arm, attempting to
speak,

Speak, and after a moment's pause said—

“ Cathcart, you have had a letter also ?”

“ I have.”

“ Before I have courage to open my own, tell me—is Willoughby well ? and are there hopes of our seeing him again ?”

“ He is well,” answered Cathcart ; but of seeing him again he gives me no hopes : to you, perhaps, he may be, and I hope is more explicit.”

Celestina staid not to reply ; but hurrying as well as she was able to her own room, tore open her letter, which was in these words :

London, April 3, 1788.

“ What must be the misery the man
 “ endures, who only a few days since had
 “ the immediate prospect of calling Ce-
 “ lestina his, and who is now compelled
 “ not only to leave her, but to leave her
 “ uncertain whether he may ever again
 “ dare to entertain that hope—whether he
 “ shall ever see her more !

VOL. II.

C.

How

“ How I have loved you, Celestina—
“ how I still love you—I surely need not
“ repeat. This passion you well know—

“ Grew with my growth, and strengthen'd with my
“ strength:”

“ you will not therefore believe that any
“ circumstance can diminish—any time
“ efface it. Yet such are the barriers
“ that may be between us, that perhaps
“ I may never dare again to see you; or
“ only when I have submitted to the
“ dreadful sacrifice required of me, and
“ given my hand to one to whom my
“ heart must ever be a stranger: and
“ yet, Celestina, if to this I ever do
“ submit, it will only be to enable me to
“ place you in the situation you deserve as
“ to fortune, and because it matters not,
“ if I cannot pass my life with you, with
“ whom it may be my destiny to pass
“ it; for then, it must in every event
“ be equally unhappy. Celestina! I am
“ aware of the appearance my conduct
“ must

“ must have in your eyes; aware of it
“ without having the power to explain
“ it. I have sworn that I will not un-
“ veil this fatal mystery till I either can
“ see you, with all those delicious hopes
“ *unempoisoned* that were so lately mine,
“ or till I have learned to regard you—
“ not with less affection, for that is im-
“ possible, but with—I bewilder my-
“ self—I know not what I would say—
“ only let this be understood as my mean-
“ ing, that wherever I may be, or what-
“ ever I may become, my fondest affec-
“ tions, my love, my esteem, must be
“ yours. It is more than probable that I
“ shall go abroad; and you, Celestina,
“ whither will you go? Suffer me to
“ name my wishes, though I hardly dare
“ hope you will comply with them—Why
“ should you not stay at Alvestone? If
“ *ever I return to it*, you will be it’s
“ mistress; if I never return, you might
“ find a melancholy pleasure—But again
“ I am wandering from my point: I will

“ not dictate to you, my lovely friend, I,
“ who am incapable of judging what I
“ ought to do for myself; for in the midst
“ of my reflections a thousand bitter
“ possibilities distract me: Celestina may
“ renounce me as unworthy of her; may
“ learn to despise me, or what is yet
“ more dreadful, she may learn to love
“ another. Oh! Celestina! should this
“ ever happen—should you ever give
“ that heart, which it was the glory of
“ my life to possess, to another;—and
“ yet, situated as I may find myself, it
“ may perhaps be—— But I must con-
“ clude while I am able, and call off my
“ thoughts from myself, to promote Ce-
“ lestina’s future comforts, if I can yet
“ contribute to it, who have perhaps been
“ it’s destroyer.

“ Do not write to me. Expressions of
“ your anxiety and regret I cannot bear.
“ It is as much as I can now do to keep
“ my senses. Gracious heaven! that ever
“ I should

“ I should say to Celestina, do not write
“ to me !

“ Cathcart has my directions how to
“ act in all pecuniary matters at Alvestone,
“ and to stay in the house till he takes
“ possession of his own, which I suppose
“ will be as soon as old Winnington dies :
“ then he will continue to superintend the
“ farm, and to receive the rents, out of
“ which I have directed him to pay you
“ fifty guineas every quarter, and to an-
“ swer any farther demands that you may
“ make upon him : and you must not,
“ Celestina, refuse this ; for remember that
“ the master of the whole fortune should
“ now have been your's, and that you
“ have a right to this trifle—perhaps to
“ much more. But if these reasons are
“ insufficient to conquer your reluctance,
“ remember, Celestina, that Willoughby,
“ the unhappy Willoughby asks it of you,
“ as the greatest alleviation his wretched-
“ ness now admits of.

C 3

“ Wherever

“ Wherever you are, let Cathcart give
“ me constant information; and whenever
“ I can tell you that the weight which now
“ presses on my heart is removed, I will
“ write—write! no, I will then fly to my
“ Celestina from the extremity of the
“ earth. Perhaps I may now be in a few
“ days on the sea; but I go no farther
“ than to the South of Europe: Celestina,
“ it would be a very great comfort to me
“ to hear from Cathcart, before I go,
“ what you intend to do: it would be a
“ still greater to know that you deter-
“ mine to remain at least this summer at
“ Alvestone: but you are now with a
“ most excellent man, who is capable of
“ advising you: in him, Celestina, you
“ will have a friend and protector.

“ Oh! why is it my lot to refer you
“ to another for protection, when to be
“ your friend, your lover, your husband,
“ was so lately the first hope, as it has
“ ever been the first wish of my existence.
“ But I am running again into useless re-
“ petition.

“petition. Celestina, if I ever seemed
“worthy of your regard, give not away
“hastily those affections which were
“mine! If ever I can claim them again—
“we may be happy; if not—but I can-
“not finish the sentence—I know not
“what I would write, nor am I able to
“read over what I have written. May
“God bless and protect you! Adieu,
“dearest Celestina!

“GEORGE WILLOUGHBY.”

Celestina read over this letter the first time in such perturbation, that except a general notion that notwithstanding Willoughby had *involuntarily* left her they should meet no more, she had very little idea of its contents.

Her's were sensations of anguish which no appeal to friendship, no participation of her sentiments with another, could mitigate or appease. Cathcart knew no more of the motives of Willoughby's conduct than she did herself; Mr. Thorold was equally ig-

norant ; and to neither of them could she look for consolation. She tried to recover her composure ; she a second time read the letter : it grew more and more inexplicable ; and after having anxiously waited for it so many days, it's arrival seemed now only either to embarrass her with new conjectures, or to torment her with apprehensions of his marrying Miss Fitz-Hayman, for to that the close of the first sentence evidently alluded. Nothing but the natural strength of her understanding could have supported her under the first tumultuous sensations of redoubled consternation and wild conjecture, which now assailed her. The longer she studied the letter, the more impossible she found any explanation of Willoughby's conduct : still the assurances of his unshaken attachment sweetened the bitterness of her destiny ; he was living ; he still loved her ; her situation, therefore, however uneasy, was not desperate ; and, as the first astonishment at the incomprehensible contents of a letter, which
was

was expected to clear up every doubt, subsided, the lawless cause of despondence, and again she examined every separate paragraph, trying to extract from all that would bear it, something to cherish that hope, without which her existence would have been insupportable.

Every request of Willoughby had with her the force of a command; but that he made in regard to her continuing at Alvestone was so worded, as if he hardly himself thought she ought to comply with it. The impropriety of it appeared evident; but in every other instance she determined to be governed by his wishes, and as far as was now in her power to contribute to his satisfaction by affording him all the consolation that depended upon her. Of the pleasure of living for a beloved object, though perhaps personally disunited for ever, of believing that wherever he was, her ease and happiness were ever in his thoughts, she was fully sensible; and she now found in it a consolation so

C 5

soothing

soothing to her mind, that she was soon enabled to return to Cathcart, who waited for her in the parlour, with more composure than on her leaving him it was likely she would soon obtain. She found herself unequal to entering on a discussion of the letter, which she gave Cathcart to read; and on his returning it in silence, but with a look sufficiently expressive of his astonishment, she told him, that nothing remained but for them to fulfil as nearly as possible all the injunctions of Willoughby. "He desires me not to write to him," said she. "Even in that I shall, with whatever reluctance, obey him at present, and so I certainly shall in what relates to following the advice of Mr. Thorold. A little time will be necessary before I can fix on any plan of life: but as my dear Willoughby expects to hear of me from you, tell him that I bear our separation, cruel as it is, with fortitude and calmness, convinced as I am that our connection is not broken by any cause that ought to make

make me blush that it had ever been intended." She stopped a moment to recover her voice, which faltered and almost failed, and then added—"No, Cathcart, whatever has divided us, I have the firmest reliance on Willoughby's honour."

"And on his love," said Cathcart, "you may, dear Madam, with equal firmness rely: and though these perfect convictions render this strange separation more wonderful, they will I trust sustain your courage through it—I say through it, because I am almost certain it will be of no long duration."

"Ah! Cathcart!" cried Celestina mournfully, "I would I could think so! But it is indeed very fruitless and very painful to enter again on these bewildering conjectures, in which, as there is no end, there is little use: and I have need of all my spirits to enable me to support an evil, for which I cannot account; I will not therefore waste them in guessing or lamenting, but employ them to obey him to whom

my heart must, in every change of circumstance, and though I were certain never more to see him, be fondly and faithfully devoted. Tell him so, my good friend: tell him how well I bear this severe blow, more severe as coming from an unknown hand; and assure him that if he will allow me to write to him, I will not distress him by useless complaints, or aggravate his sorrow by representing my own."

Again she stopped, while Cathcart expressed his admiration of her just and noble resolutions; and after a moment, finding the exertion too much for her, she added hastily—"tell him thus much, Cathcart, in the letter you will of course write to him this afternoon; and tell him that your next letter shall inform him, if it is still uneasy to him to receive a letter from me, of the arrangements I will make under the guidance of Mr. Thorold for my future life: but say, that they will be such as will render his generous intentions as to pecuniary matters needless. I would fain
explain

explain my thoughts in that respect; but in truth I am not able just now. Some hours of reflection will be necessary to me. Farewel, therefore, dear Cathcart, for this morning; I shall of course see you again in a few days."

Cathcart assured her he would be with her again the following Friday; or the intervening day, if he received any new intelligence from Willoughby. She then charged him with many kind wishes and remembrances to Jessy, who was now, he told her, so confined by her grandfather that she could not get to her, and then took his leave to return to Alvestone, and execute the wishes of Willoughby by giving him a minute detail of all that had passed with Celestina.

CHAPTER III.

MR. Thorold, who was informed that Celestina had received letters from Willoughby, felt a true friendly impatience to know their contents: but feeling also how much his lovely guest must in any event be agitated, he not only forbore to intrude upon her with any enquiries himself, but in order that she might not suffer even from the looks of his family, which he knew could not fail to express solicitude arising from less generous motives, he sent her up a note to her own apartment, in which he begged she would not come down to dinner, to put herself, through form, into any situation that might be in any degree painful. This exemption was particularly gratifying to her, as the younger

younger Thorold was this day expected at dinner, and was to remain at home for some weeks; and his elder brother, a Captain in the army, who had been some time in Ireland, was to meet him in the evening. Celestina was unfit for company, and above all, the company of strangers; and again she regretted that in the first unsettled tumult of her spirits she had agreed to Mr. Thorold's proposal, instead of going back to the lodgings she had formerly inhabited: she was now, however, compelled to remain where she was, till she could determine, with the advice of Mr. Thorold, whither to go. She thought it probable that he might wish her to remain with him; but to this, except his friendly regard for her, and the advantage of being near Cathcart and Jeffy, she had no inducement; and wherever she was, she determined it should not be as a mere visitor for any length of time, but that she would pay for her board. Again the quiet and liberty of her cottage

ON.

on the heath recurred to her ; but when she enjoyed that quiet, her heart had not undergone those vicissitudes of happiness and misery, which had now, she greatly feared, excluded tranquillity from her bosom for ever ; what had then afforded her a species of melancholy pleasure, the distant view of a spot in Alvestone Park, would now serve only to render her more unhappy, and to encourage that tendency to repine, which her reason told her she should, both on Willoughby's account and her own, rather resolve to conquer than endeavour to indulge : she believed, however, that if once some resolution was formed as to her future residence, she should be easier herself, and be better able to satisfy Willoughby. To this subject, therefore, she turned her thoughts, and examined with a heavy heart several different plans that offered themselves to her mind.

Nothing could be more comfortless than her reflections : she was not only an orphan,

phan, and a stranger in England, but knew not whether there was in the world any being whose protection she had the remotest right to claim. Lady Molyneux had never written to her since their separation, and even if Willoughby should approve of her again seeking the protection of his sister, which she had great reason to doubt, she knew not whether Matilda and her husband would receive her; and from that want of heart she had too often discovered in them both, she could not think of making the experiment. She had no intimacy with any other person; for though many of the families she had been accustomed to visit while Mrs. Willoughby lived, had daughters, who had cultivated an acquaintance with her, she had already seen enough of the general conduct of the world to know that she should now be no longer an acceptable guest, and that an individual to whom court is made assiduously, while shining as an equal among fashionable circles, is soon forgotten; or
if

if remembered, despised, when those adventitious advantages surround her no longer. She had heard from Vavasour, for Willoughby himself had always carefully avoided the subject, that the sudden desertion of Miss Fitz Hayman, to whom Willoughby was supposed to be so firmly engaged, and his resolution of marrying his mother's adopted daughter, had been very much talked of in the extensive circle who were connected or acquainted with the family: she could not doubt but that their sudden separation on the very eve of their marriage was as generally known; and had she found any temptation to return to the society she had quitted, this painful certainty, the prying curiosity that would be excited, and the malicious conjecture that would be made, would effectually have counteracted it.

Towards evening she found sufficient courage to entreat Mr. Thorold's attention for half an hour. He came to her immediately.

diately, and she put into his hands the letter she had received from Willoughby.

He read it with great attention, and as it should seem with great concern, and then, in the expressive manner that was usual with him, gave it back to her without speaking.

Benevolence and pity were now visible in his features, which were masculine, strong, and frequently stern; but Celestina was hardly enough accustomed to him to understand his silence completely. "You see, dear Sir," said she timidly—"you see that Willoughby refers me to you, and I would very fain avail myself of the benefit of your advice."

"It is always at your service," replied Mr. Thorold; "but on what occasion do you now ask it?"

"I wish to know," replied she with still greater hesitation, "what you think it advisable for me to do? where you think I ought to settle myself?"

"I am,

“ I am sorry,” answered he, “ you think it so soon necessary to turn your thoughts that way. I hoped that you would stay here at least for some weeks; and really I can give you no other advice than to do so. The mystery which I cannot develope, may by that time be removed, and we shall have time not only to hear more of Willoughby, but if nothing occurs on his part to re establish you at Alvestone, to cast about for a proper and permanent situation for you: think no more, therefore, my dear ward, for such I consider you, of leaving us at present, and rather exert your admirable understanding in quieting your spirits, and in acquiring fortitude to bear adversity and evil, if they should be finally your portion; or equality of temper to enjoy, what it is more difficult to enjoy well—happiness and prosperity.”

Celestina would now have spoken of the inconvenience to which so long a visit might put his family, and the little claim

she

She had to such unusual kindness from him and Mrs. Thorold; but he suffered her not to continue these apologies, seemed little pleased that she attempted to make them; and then re-assuming his good humour, he left her, bidding her try to recover her looks, and to dismiss as much as she could from her mind the distressing events of the last ten days.

Celestina now found that she could not immediately remove without offending the friend to whom Willoughby had recommended her, and prepared, since she could not be indulged with solitude, to mix with his family, and be as little as possible a weight on those, who, whatever might be their good humour, could not be expected to enter into her sorrows; the next morning therefore at breakfast she joined Mrs. Thorold, her daughter, and her two sons, to both of whom she was immediately introduced, and from whose scrutinizing looks she sought refuge in talking with forced cheerfulness to Arabella.

Captain

Captain Thorold was the eldest of the family, and Montague the youngest. The former of these young men had been adopted by his uncle, who, after a life passed in the army, had died a general officer at a very advanced age, and had left his nephew his whole fortune, which was near fifteen hundred a year, after the death of his wife, who surviving him only a twelvemonth, Captain Thorold had now been some time in possession of his estate, and of a considerable sum of money.

But accustomed from his infancy to the unsettled life of a soldier, he still continued it from habit and choice; and though his father and his family were very solicitous to have him marry and settle near them, he seemed to have no inclination to resign his freedom for the pleasures of domestic society. Novelty and amusement were his pursuits, and his fortune gave him the power to indulge himself. He had what is generally called a very handsome person; but without his military air, his figure
would

would have been rather esteemed clumsy than graceful. He had lived much among the circles who give the ton, dressed well, and had that sort of understanding which recommended him to general society, and particularly to that of the ladies, with whom he was an almost universal favourite, and who had agreed to call him the handsome Thorold, even before he became possessed of a fortune, which in the opinion of most of the belles at country quarters, and still more in the opinion of their mothers, more than redoubled his attractions. Thus spoiled from his first entrance into life, he had learned to consider himself as irresistible, and supposed every woman he saw his own, if he chose to take the trouble of securing her.

His air and manner were tinged with the consequence he derived from this persuasion; and from having indulged himself in the cruel vanity of extensive conquest, he was incapable of any lasting or serious attachment. At the first public meeting

meeting at any town he happened to be quartered at, he elected some goddess of the day; with her he danced, he walked, he rode, he coquetted; and by studied looks, and tender speeches, soon persuaded the inexperienced girl that she had secured in her chains the handsome Thorold. The delusion of the young woman herself, and the envy of the cotemporary belles, sometimes lasted till the removal of the corps to another station: when he took a cold farewell, and left her to suffer all the pain of disappointed love and mortified vanity: but he not unfrequently indulged himself in witnessing the distress this wanton folly inflicted; and after some days of attention so marked and unequivocal as to give the lady reason to suppose an absolute declaration of his passion was certainly to be expected, he suddenly broke off the acquaintance, pretended to forget their intimacy, bowed to her when they met with the air of a stranger, and beginning the same career with some other pretty girl
of

of the place, he affected to treat with disdain and wonder the reports he had himself raised of his permanent attachment to the first lady, and laughed with her rival at the melancholy moping looks, or glances of angry disappointment, of the deserted beauty, declaring himself amazed at her having the vanity to suppose him serious, because he had shewn her a few trifling attentions which meant nothing.

This conduct of his son had given Mr. Thorold great uneasiness a few years before, but lately, as he had been in Ireland, and in very distant quarters, his father had heard no more of it, and flattered himself that now, at near thirty, this unsettled temper and unjustifiable levity would end in his marrying and quitting the army. But though a very fond father to all his children, Mr. Thorold loved the Captain less than the others; partly perhaps because he was so early removed from him, and rendered independent of his care, and partly because his temper and disposition

resembled not his own ; while Mrs. Thorold doated on her eldest son, whose figure and fortune gratified her vanity, and whom she thought no young woman could possibly deserve, unless she possessed at once fortune, beauty, and fashion.

Montague Thorold, who was but just turned of one and twenty, and was designed by his father for the church, was as modest and unassuming as his brother was arrogant and pretending. He was a very good scholar, with a passion for poetry, and was just of the age to be in love with every handsome woman he saw ; without having the courage to speak to any of them in prose, he celebrated his divinities in verse, and sighed forth his tender sentiments in sonnets and elegies, which enriched the magazines, and now and then the public prints, under the fictitious names of Alphonso or Lyfimachus.

Such were the two young men who were now added to the tea-table of Mrs. Thorold, where all the family were assembled
except

except Mr. Thorold himself, who always breakfasted early, and then went out to his farm or among his parishioners.

Mrs. Thorold had told her sons that a young lady was visiting at the house, whose history she had given them in short hand, describing her as a dependant on the late Mrs. Willoughby, whom her son had very simply intended to marry at Alvestone; but the evening before the appointed wedding day had broken off the match, from prudential motives, as she supposed, and by the advice of some of his friends who had come down from London.

This was the idea Mrs. Thorold had herself conceived of the affair, and she had no means of being undeceived; for Mr. Thorold, who knew that with her a command was better than an argument, and whose authority was pretty firmly established, had ordered her positively to ask no questions of his guest, and had peremptorily refused to answer those she put to himself. She obeyed, but not without many murmurs;

but knowing that Mr. Thorold would be much disobliged by her refusal to entertain Celestina with kindness, had put a restraint upon herself, and shewed her hitherto much civility, though not without many complaints to Arabella, when they were alone, of her father's absurdity in forcing people into the family, and refusing even to satisfy her who and what they were, or what claim they had to the kindness he exacted for them.

From his mother's sketch of their visitor the evening before, Captain Thorold had very little curiosity to see her ; and Montague, whose heart was in one of it's most violent paroxisms of love for the fair daughter of an attorney at Henley, with whom he became acquainted about a fortnight before, was occupied in composing an elegy on absence, and thought he could with indifference have beheld at that period Helen herself: he had enquired of his mother and sister if their guest was handsome: Mrs. Thorold answered—"No, not

not at all handsome in my opinion;" and Arabella said—"Yes, surely, Mama, she is rather pretty-ish."

On her entering the room, however, both the gentlemen were instantly of an opinion very different from that of their mother and their sister: yet Celestina had not now that dazzling complexion, or that animated countenance, which were once so dangerous to behold; she was pale and languid; her eyes had all their softness, but their lustre was diminished; and the enchanting sweetness which used to play about her mouth was now supplied by a melancholy smile, the effect of a faint effort to conceal the anguish of the heart.

Such as she now appeared, however, the Captain thought her very lovely; and Montague almost instantly forgot the nymph for whom he had been dying in song all the morning, and saw in the interesting languor of Celestina—in her faded cheek, and downcast eyes, a sentimental effect, which none of the fair creatures

whom he had celebrated had ever so eminently possessed: but if such were his sentiments before she spoke, his admiration arose to extravagance, when, after breakfast, his sister engaged her in a walk in which the two gentlemen attended them, and when he found that her mind corresponded with the elegance of her form; that she was very well read, had a taste for poetry, and understood Italian, of which he was enthusiastically fond. Captain Thorold, on whom these advantages made less impression, was not quite pleased during this walk with the unusual talkativeness of his brother, who generally suffered him to take the lead in conversation. He now attempted to put by him two or three times, and to relate anecdotes of people in high life: of what General Wallace said to him at Dublin Castle upon his introduction to the Duchess of —, and of a bon mot of Lady Mary Marsden's at supper one evening; but Celestina, who cared nothing about the General, the Duchess,
or

or Lady Mary, let the conversation drop without expressing any pleasure in it, and again lent her attention to Montague, who desired her to correct his accent while he repeated—

“ O primavera, gioventu dell’ anno—”

Celestina modestly assured him she was incapable of correcting him; but he besought her so earnestly to recite the lines to him, that she inconsiderately attempted it, and in the most enchanting accents began—

“ O primavera gioventu dell’ anno;

“ Bella madre di fiori.

“ D’erbe novelle e di novelli amori :

“ Tu torni ben—ma teco

“ Non tornano i sereni.

“ E fortunati di delle mie gioje :”

The cruel remembrance that now pressed upon her heart made her voice tremble, and gave it additional tenderness. She tried to recover it; and going into a lower tone, went on with—

D. 4r

“ Tu

“ Tu torni ben—tu torni
“ Ma teco altro no torna
“ Che del perduto mio caro tesoro
“ Lo rimembranza misera e dolente.”

She could go no farther: the tears were in her eyes; but she tried to smile, and to stifle the deep sigh that was rising as she said—“ I cannot go on, for really I remember no more.”

The young man, fascinated by her manner and her voice, now recollected—with reluctance recollected, that these seducing tones were drawn forth by the reality of those sufferings the poet described. He looked at her in silence; and as he marked the sad and pensive expression that remained on her countenance, that astonishment, which he had hardly time to feel before, arose: he thought it impossible that Mr. Willoughby, having the power to marry such a woman, and having once formed the resolution to do so, should by any persuasions be diverted from his purpose; and he found that in the single hour
he

he had been with her, he admired her enough to sacrifice every thing to her, were it possible that her regard could be transferred to him. The improbability that it ever could, struck him forcibly, and rendered him as silent as Celestina herself; while the Captain, who had now an opportunity of engrossing her attention, rallied her on being so much affected. "I have no notion now," said he, "of giving way to those sort of things. I love gay and cheerful poetry. One is tired of weeping at the fictitious misery of fictitious persons. I remember being some time ago at a conversation in Dublin, where we talked of the fashionable indifference which every body has now for tragedy; and my friend Hargrave, who has written, you know, several things himself, was condemning it as the certain marks of the vitiated taste and imbecility of the age: I took up the argument on the other side; and Lady Mary Marsden thought as I did. Indeed every body present allowed:

D 5.

that

that it was quite absurd to go to a play, which is intended to amuse and entertain, only to be made uneasy. She agreed with me that people have concern enough in real life, and need not go seek it in way of diversion."

"And did her Ladyship," enquired Montague Thorold, "give no other reasons?"

"I think those are very good reasons," replied the Captain.

"They might be so," answered his brother, "for a woman of fashion; but I am persuaded literary people and people of taste think quite otherwise; and the ancients, whose superior intellectual advantages are not to be disputed——"

"O prithee Montague," interrupted the Captain, "don't run us down with college cant. I am talking of the world we live in; and the opinions of people who lived two thousand years ago are no more in question now than their dresses."

He then went on to retail other opinions

of

of Lady Mary Marsden, who was, as it seemed, the oracle of the hour in the society he had just left. Celestina heard him with apparent attention, but in truth without knowing what he said; his brother, rendered impatient by being interrupted in his conversation with her, walked away; and Arabella, who loved to hear descriptions of fine people, and to attend to fashionable conversation, kept up the dialogue till the end of their walk; when Celestina went to her own room, Arabella to her dressing table, and the Captain, finding his mother at work in the parlour, thought he had a right to ask her a few questions about Celestina, in return for the perpetual tone of interrogation she had kept up towards him ever since his arrival.

To Mrs. Thorold, the next gratification to that of asking questions was the pleasure of answering them: she told her son, therefore, not only all she knew, but invented answers on some points which she only guessed at; and he understood, from her

D. 6. information,

information, that Celestina had been very partial to Willoughby ; and so strong was this partiality described, that he began to doubt whether the proposed marriage had not been a mere finesse to throw her off her guard, and get her wholly into his power ; and whether his abrupt departure had not been in consequence of the success of this disingenuous but not unprecedented method of proceeding.

Captain Thorold had seen Willoughby frequently in his last visit at home, and knew that he had every advantage which a fine person and engaging manners could give him ; he was well acquainted with the society among which he lived ; and had heard some of them, but particularly Vavafour, described as being very gay and unprincipled ; he had therefore little difficulty in supposing that Willoughby resembled those with whom he associated ; and that Celestina had been the victim of those arts which he supposed no man ever scrupled to practise where the object was so well worth

worth the trouble ; especially one so unprotected as she was, where no rigid father was in the way to obstruct their designs, or Chamont-like brother to avenge the wrong they might commit. Willoughby now, however, seemed quite out of the question ; and he doubted not, but that after a short interval given to sentimental regret on the loss of a first lover, she would listen to other vows, and encourage the passion, which he thought it might be very amusing to entertain her with, without meaning however to offer himself to fill such engagements as Willoughby had broken. While he meditated on this project, he could not help smiling at the cullibility of his father, who had thus, he thought, taken into his protection, and made the companion of his wife and daughter, the deserted mistress of Willoughby.

CHAPTER IV.

THE following morning Cathcart was early at the house of Mr. Thorold; and Celestina, who rose now earlier than usual, (to enjoy, if it could be called enjoyment, a few hours, before she was compelled to hide her sorrows under the appearance of attention to the family she was with) met him as he came from the stable; and instead of going into the house, she desired he would walk with her towards the village. "You have news for me," said she; "but if I may guess by your countenance, none that will relieve the weight I feel on my heart."

"I am afraid not," replied he: "yet indeed I have nothing to say that should increase it. Mr. Willoughby is well; he writes

writes to me with more cheerfulness than I expected, and assures me that he has a long letter for you, which he shall send from Dover, where he shall finish it."

"From Dover! he is then set out on this expedition. Ah! Cathcart! and ought not such intelligence to add to my concern?"

"Not at all," replied Cathcart. "You knew before that it was his intention; and he tells me that on the event of this journey depends his ever seeing Alvestone again. There is certainly a chance of it's terminating favourably: at all events, if this absence is to end your suspense, you should not only submit to it, but endeavour, my dear Miss De Mornay, to keep up both your health and spirits."

"Alas!" Cathcart, answered Celestina, "there is nothing so easy to the happy as to give such advice, nothing so difficult to the wretched as to take it." She then enquired into the other particulars contained in Willoughby's letter; and after informing,

informing herself of the day when he expected to be at Dover, and how long it might probably be before she should receive the letter he promised her, she turned the conversation on Jessy, whom she expressed an eager wish to see: and soon after Montague Thorold, who impatiently watched her wherever she went, came to tell her that his mother waited breakfast for her.

Cathcart, however, declined the invitation to breakfast with them, and wishing Celestina a good morning, and promising to be with her again in a day or two, he went in search of Mr. Thorold, with whom he said he had some business.

Many succeeding days passed without any interesting event. The Captain took every occasion to impress on Celestina an idea of his consequence, and the fashionable style he lived in, to which she gave very little attention; while his brother, whenever he left him an opportunity, talked to her of books, or read to her passages in favourite authors of which he
heard;

heard her express approbation: she was prevailed upon to sing duets with Arabella; and he was enchanted with her voice and manner; she sat down to draw the flowers he gathered for her, while he hung over her in raptures, or held her pallet, or read a botanical description of the plants she was painting. Captain Thorold rode out occasionally to visit such of the neighbouring families as he considered worth his attention; Arabella was often of his party, and Mrs. Thorold engaged in domestic concerns; and then if Celestina cou'd not escape to her own room before Montague, who was always upon the watch for her, could interrupt her, he entreated her so earnestly to walk with him, was so obligingly solicitous to please her, and seemed so mortified when she attempted to excuse herself, that she could seldom resolve to refuse him her conversation, even when she was most willing to be alone; and in the similarity of their tastes and studies, and in the brotherly though silent sympathy he appeared

to feel for her sorrows, there was something soothing to her sick heart, which rejected every idea of love but for Willoughby: conscious of which, and supposing that no man could consider her otherwise than as destined to be his wife, or to die unmarried, she dreamed not that she was granting to young Thorold indulgence fatal to his repose.

He was himself soon aware of the danger, but he courted it; and though he understood that the heart of Celestina was engaged, he fancied, that without any pretensions to her love, he should be happier in being admitted to her friendship, than the unrivalled affections of any other woman could make him. He was too artless, and too proud of his judgment, to attempt to conceal this attachment from his father, who, had Celestina been disengaged, would have preferred her, with her small fortune and uncertain birth, to the richest heiress in the county: but knowing how she was circumstanced, he saw
his

his younger son's increasing partiality with some concern, and took an opportunity, when they were alone, to tell him the real circumstances of Celestina in regard to Willoughby. "I can consider her," said he, "no otherwise than his affianced wife. They are parted by some cause of which I am ignorant, but which will probably be removed: in the mean time her youth and beauty render her situation very dangerous; as from her being a foreigner, an orphan, and probably the natural daughter of some person of high fashion in France, who has taken care to destroy all evidence of her real family, she is without relations and without protection. Willoughby's father was my old friend. When I was an indigent curate he gave me a living, which, though I have now, from being possessed of greater preferment, resigned, I consider as my first step towards affluence. I am therefore bound to the family by gratitude, and to young Willoughby I am bound by personal friendship and esteem.

Except

Except something too much bordering on rashness in his temper, I hardly know any man so faultless and so worthy of regard. He adores Miss De Mornay, and I am convinced the happiness of his life depends on their union. Finding him torn from her for the present, at the very moment this union was to take place, I entered at once into all the uneasiness that must have assailed him, and I voluntarily offered my protection to her, which he has since acknowledged in a letter to me to be the greatest kindness he could receive. I have promised him to continue it as long as she has occasion for it or will accept it. Do not, therefore, Montague, by any of your excentricities, make this uneasy either to her or to me. Don't fancy yourself in love with a young woman who is in fact married. Any other kind of attention or regard you shew her will oblige me; but let us have no making love, unless you would drive her away and greatly disoblige me."

The

The young man readily promised what at the moment he was sincere in, that he would not make love to Celestina; but he did not promise not to feel the passion, against which it was too late already to guard him. Mr. Thorold however supposed, that after this explanation there was nothing to fear from the extreme susceptibility of his younger son; and for the eldest, he was too certain that he had not a heart on which the charms and virtues of Celestina, or of any other beautiful and interesting woman, could make any permanent impression. He was easy therefore in a situation which would have made many narrow minded and selfish parents very much otherwise; and did not think the presence of his two sons at home, a sufficient reason for withdrawing his generous kindness from Celestina, to whom he was indeed affectionately attached for her own sake, and to whom he loved to consider himself as a guardian and protector.

Mrs. Tho-

Mrs. Thorold, always busied about the intrigues and schemes of the rest of the world, saw not very minutely into those of her own family. As to her eldest son, she contemplated him as a superior being, who had a right to marry the greatest heiress of the kingdom. She heard him speak so often of Lady Marys and Lady Carolines, that she concluded he might have any of them whenever he pleased; and had set her imagination so high as to his merits and his fortune, that she never supposed he could think of bringing her any other than a titled daughter-in-law. Celestina, whom she looked upon as a creature whose title to respect was very questionable, a dependant from her birth, and now little better than a dependant on herself, was not a person likely to make any impression on Captain Thorold; and the prejudice operated on her person and her manners. Mrs. Thorold could not see that she was handsome, or feel that she was interesting; and when the attention of young Thorold was

was

was very strongly marked towards her, his mother only ridiculed him, telling him that he was never easy but when playing the Philander, and that he cared not with whom.

Nothing, therefore, interrupted the progress of that serious passion, which Montague Thorold determined to indulge, and of which Celestina was perfectly unconscious. The more unreserved flattery and free address of the Captain she knew how to repress; and received all his advances with so much coldness, that his pride was piqued; and unused to the slightest repulse, he determined not to brook it from one, who had, in his private opinion, very little right to assume dignity or affect disdain.

The manner he took up towards her in consequence of these opinions, was so very disagreeable to her, that it forced her more than ever into the society of his brother; before whom, though the Captain held him very cheap as a boy and a pedant, he
could

could not well address to her such speeches as he had ventured to utter several times when he seized an opportunity of speaking to her alone, or unheard by the rest of the family. Whenever, therefore, she was compelled to be below, she contrived to have Montague Thorold sit next to her, to accept his arm as they walked, and to address her discourse to him: and flattered by this evident preference, he let no occasion pass of proving how happy it made him.

So passed heavily for Celestina, the days that intervened between that when she last saw Cathcart, and that on which she expected Willoughby's letter from Dover. The day arrived at length; and Celestina, who happened to be sitting with Arabella and her brothers when the letters were brought, could hardly support herself while the Captain took them from the servant, and reading the direction of each, threw them across the table, now one to his sister, now one to his brother, and bade Montague carry a third to his father.

There

There was none for Celestina, though Cathcart had told her it would be directed to her at the house of Mr. Thorold. Of this bitter disappointment, however, she spoke not, but tried to conceal the change it occasioned in her countenance, and hastened, as soon as she could, to weep alone, over the sad idea that Willoughby's diminished, perhaps annihilated love, had allowed him to torture her with suspense which he might so easily have avoided by punctuality.

Another almost sleepless night was the consequence of this delay: but though without rest in the night, Celestina rose as soon as day appeared. At no other time but early in the morning she had now any chance of being alone either in the garden or the neighbouring fields, and the air seemed necessary to her overburthened spirits. In the fields, she seemed to breathe more freely, and her heart, which often felt as if it would burst, was relieved while

She was allowed to weep unmasked and uninterrupted.

A narrow road, shaded by thick rows of branching elms, led towards the village, which was that way almost a mile from the house of Mr. Thorold, who did not inhabit the parsonage but an house he had built on a farm of his own. Celestina, to avoid being seen from the windows of the house, which commanded the garden and the meadows near it, took her way down this lane. Her thoughts ran over the strange events of the preceding years, in which she had experienced so much anguish, anguish embittered by the transient promise of supreme happiness. As she reviewed her whole life, it seemed to have been productive only of regret. "Why," cried she, "was I ever born? Alas! my existence was the occasion of misery to those who gave it me! Why did dearest Mrs. Willoughby take me from a confinement where I was dead to the world, and where perhaps neglect and hardship might
long

long since have released me? What will now become of me? If Willoughby forgets me, how shall I find courage to drag about a wretched being? useful to nobody, for whom nobody is interested, and which seems marked by heaven for calamity!"

These melancholy reflections led her on, till a turn out of the road brought her to the stile of the church-yard. She leant pensively over it, and read the rustic inscriptions on the tomb stones. One was that of a young woman of nineteen: it was her own age; and Celestina felt an emotion of envy towards the village girl, whose early death the rural poet lamented in the inscription. "Merciful heaven!" cried she, "is early death ever really to be lamented? and should I not be happier to die now than to live; as perhaps I shall to be forgotten?" Insensibly this idea took possession of her fancy; and with her pencil she wrote the following lines in her pocket book, not without some recollection

of Edwards's thirty seventh and forty fourth sonnets :

S O N N E T.

Oh thou ! who sleepest where hazle bands entwine,
 The vernal gras, with paler violets drest,
 I would, sweet maid ! thy humble bed were mine,
 And mine, thy calm and enviable rest.
 For never more, by human ills oppressd,
 Shall thy soft spirit fruitlessly repine :
 Thou canst not now thy fondest hope resign
 Even in the hour that should have made thee blest.
 Light lies the turf upon thy virgin breast ;
 And lingering here, to love and sorrow true,
 The youth, who once thy simple heart possess'd,
 Shall mingle tears with April's early dew ;
 While still for him, shall faithful Memory save,
 Thy form and virtues from the silent grave !

Celestina, who had a natural turn to poetry, had very rarely indulged it ; but since she had passed so many hours with Willoughby, his passionate fondness for it, and his desire that she should not neglect the talent she had received from nature, had turned her thoughts to it's cultivation ; and now almost the first use she made

made of it was to lament that she lived, since none of her acquirements were to please him, for whom alone she wished to possess either life or talents.

She had finished her sonnet, and read it over aloud: she changed a word or two, again read it, and was putting it into her pocket book, when she was startled by the sight of Montague Thorold, who appeared behind her, though she had not heard him approach. "Do not," he cried, "be offended, dearest Miss De Mornay, if I thus break in upon your solitude; and do not," continued he, taking her hand, in which she still held the pocket book—"do not punish me by putting away what I have so earnest a desire to hear."

Celestina, half angry, replied—"I have nothing, Sir, worth your hearing."

"I have offended you," said he, in the most respectful tone—"I see you are offended. If you knew my heart, you would know how much better I could bear

any misfortune than your contempt and anger."

Celestina, whose slight displeasure was already at an end, answered with a smile, that he certainly deserved neither: "but come," continued she, "you were sent I dare say to call me to breakfast and we are loitering here."

"I was not sent," answered he. "I believe it is yet earlier than you imagine it to be. You are not then offended at my interrupting you?"

"Oh no! think of it no more," said Celestina, wishing to change the discourse.

"Is it not a delicious morning?"

He answered not her question; but fixing his eyes on her's, said—"See how soon a second trespass is attempted when the first is so graciously forgiven. *May I* ask, as the most inestimable favour, to hear once more the lines you were reciting?"

"Once more!" repeated Celestina. "Have you heard them once already then?"

"I will

"I will say I have *not*, if my acknowledging that I have will displease you."

"I do not think," said Celestina carelessly, "that will mend your case much: but however the lines were not worth your hearing, and——"

"Every thing you even repeat from another," cried he, eagerly interrupting her, "is worth hearing: how much more worth hearing, when that fascinating voice is employed in expressing the sentiments of that elegant and lovely mind. Oh! Celestina!—But forgive me, Madam; it is presumption indeed in me to address you so freely; yet Celestina is the only name in the world that seems to me fit for you. The common terms of formal civility are unworthy of you. Let me then call you Celestina, not in familiarity, but in veneration, in adoration; and entreat you, implore you to oblige me."

Disconcerted at his vehemence of manner and extravagance of expression, Celestina now thought it better to put an end to

such very warm applications, by shewing him the little value in her eyes of the favour he solicited. She gave him the paper, therefore, saying coldly—"You are anxious for a very trifling matter; and as you have already heard the lines, it is hardly worth the time you must give, hastily written as they are, and with interlineations and erasures, to make them out."

"Give me then time to do it," cried he, as he kissed the paper and put it in his bosom.

Celestina, more disconcerted by his manner than before, said yet more gravely, "I beg I may have them again immediately."

"You shall indeed," replied Thorold; "but I must first read them."

"Read them then now," replied she.

"It is impossible," cried he, "for here is Arabella and my brother coming to meet us; and it is the first time that being with you, I felt their interruption as a favour."

During

During this dialogue Celestina had walked rather quickly towards the house, so that they were by this time within sight of the garden gate, from whence Captain and Miss Thorold advanced slowly towards them. Montague, as if conscious of the impropriety of what had passed, now affected to be talking of indifferent matters; and Celestina, ruffled by his wild enthusiasm, and eagerly anticipating the letter which she hoped that day would bring her from Willoughby, felt herself made uneasy by the steady and enquiring eyes of the Captain, who had acquired a very rude habit of staring people out of countenance. She was compelled however to endure it, not only while breakfast lasted, but afterwards when Arabella engaged her assistance in painting a trimming which was to compose the ornament of a gala dress for the balls at Tunbridge, whither she was going in June with the eldest of her married sisters, who was in an ill state of health.

CHAPTER V.

ARABELLA Thorold, desirous of availing herself of the superior taste and skill that Celestina possessed in such ornamental matter as she was now busy about, the merit of which she knew she might, where she was going, take entirely to herself, now invited her guest to the work-table at which she was employed; Montague took up a book to read to them aloud, while his brother sauntered idly about the room, now praising Celestina's performance, now correcting that of his sister; then humming a tune, looking at his watch, or throwing about the colours or the pencils, he seemed determined to interrupt his brother's reading, and particularly when by Montague's voice and gesture he saw that he

he hoped particularly to interest and attract the attention of his auditors. This scene, of which the painful anxiety of Celestina for her letter made her unusually impatient, was at length put an end to by the entrance of the servant from the post, and Celestina receiving, in trembling agitation, a letter with the Dover post mark, she flew with it to her own room, and read as follows :

Dover, April 11, 17—

“ The vessel which is to carry me from
 “ England and Celestina is now waiting
 “ for me ; and I have delayed writing to
 “ her till this last moment ; not because
 “ I have ever ceased to think of her with
 “ the warmest solicitude, but because I
 “ have not till now been able to collect
 “ courage to bid her a long adieu !”

“ I am going, Celestina, to the South of
 “ Europe. Perhaps my stay may be very
 “ short : perhaps I may, for the rest of my
 “ life, be doomed to be a solitary wan-

“ derer. But however destiny may dispose
 “ of *me*, let me entreat you, by all that
 “ regard which once made the happiness
 “ of my life, to take care of your health;
 “ try to regain your cheerfulness; and be-
 “ lieve me, Celestina, strangely against me
 “ as appearances are, I have not deserved
 “ to lose your confidence, nor have I any
 “ wish so fervent as for your happiness.

“ I cannot write to you on pecuniary
 “ affairs. Cathcart has, in regard to every
 “ thing of that sort, my full directions.
 “ Whenever he and Jessy become house-
 “ keepers for themselves, you will be their
 “ welcome guest, and my heavy heart will
 “ be relieved of much of its anguish :
 “ till then, I entrust you to the care and
 “ direction of the excellent friend you are
 “ now with : may it not long be necessary
 “ for me to—— But I dare not trust my-
 “ self on this subject. Write to me, for
 “ now the measure I have been driven to
 “ is adopted, I can hear from you without
 “ fearing that my resolution may be shaken.

“ Heaven

“ Heaven bless and protect you, dearest
“ Celestina ! This is the first wish I form,
“ when, after my uneasy slumber, recol-
“ lection returns in the morning, and the
“ last before I *attempt* to sleep at night.
“ Alas ! it is often only an attempt !
“ But there is no end of this—Farewel !
“ most beloved Celestina, farewel !

“ C. W.”

This letter was if possible more unsatisfactory than the last. No reason was yet given for his having left her, no certainty held out of his return ; but all, if not hopeless, was so comfortless, so obscure, that her resolution to investigate the cause of all that had happened, again failed. She feared even to attempt putting aside the fearful veil that was drawn between them. He was now in another country, from whence his return seemed uncertain ; and she seemed the most desolate and forlorn being that existed in that which he had left. Her heart sunk within her in remembering.

remembering that she might never see him more—that he hardly seemed to wish she should. Again she read his letter over. He was sleepless, restless, unhappy; and for his sufferings she wept more than for her own.

The plan he mentioned of her residing with the Cathcarts, was the only one to which, since their separation, she had looked forward with any degree of satisfaction. But that there was yet little probability of executing: for old Winnington was in even better health than he had been for some years; and though the tender assiduity of Jessy had won much even on his insensible heart, he suffered her to have no authority; and often being seized with fits of jealousy and suspicion that she went to meet and assist her father, he would insist upon her not quitting him a moment; so that she had sometimes for many days together no opportunity of seeing her husband, and had never once, since her separation from Celestina, been able to reach
her

her present abode. Celestina had not been an hour alone, before Montague Thorold tapped at her door. She dried her eyes, and pulling her hat over them, opened it to him.

“Will you not walk,” said he, apologizing however for his intrusion. “I am afraid I disturb you: but the morning is so beautiful; and we are all going to see a pond fished, with two friends of my brother’s from Exeter, who are just come in.”

“I cannot, indeed,” answered Celestina. “Pray excuse me.”

“I would not press you for the world,” said, he, “to do any thing that is disagreeable to you. But the air will be surely useful to you. You—have been weeping, Miss De Mornay! and——”

“If I have,” replied she, interrupting him, “you may be assured, Sir, that I have reason enough for my tears, and would wish to enjoy them alone.”

“Precious tears!” cried he with a deep sigh.

figh. "The letter was from the fortunate Willoughby!"

"Fortunate do you call him?" But Celestina, as if offended that any tongue but her's should name him, stopped, and turning from the door, went into her own room.

At this moment Arabella ran up stairs to fetch her cloak and gloves, and seeing her brother Montague at the door of Celestina's room, cried, as she passed him—"Hey day! are you in waiting as Page or Gentleman Usher?"

"As neither," answered he in some confusion. "I was merely asking if Miss De Mornay would walk with us."

"Oh! I dare say not," replied his sister, smiling maliciously as she looked over her shoulder at him—"I dare say not. Montague, what are you in now? Are you Romeo--'Ob! that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek!' or are you Castalio?—'Sweets planted by the hand of heaven grow here.' You always

ways make love I know by book. What I shall I call Edmund to take the part of Polydore? I think you will make it out among you."

Celestina, who had heard this speech, though it was not meant that she should, was equally amazed and hurt at it. It had however a very different effect from what the speaker intended; who having no wish that Celestina should join them, because she desired to monopolize the conversation of the two strangers, thought by rallying her brother, to break off his entreaty. Montague, mild as he was, was piqued extremely, and would resentingly have answered, if his sister had not immediately disappeared, and if Celestina had not at the same moment opened her door and said—"You compel me, Mr. Montague, to walk whether I will or no."

"Pray forgive me," said he, interrupting her. "I would purchase no pleasure at your expence."

Arabella

Arabella now returning down stairs, was surpris'd to see her preparing to go. "I thought you declined walking, Ma'am," said she formally. Celestina made an effort to conquer the resentment she justly felt, and replied coldly that the morning was so pleasant she thought it would be a pity to lose it.

Her apprehensions indeed were, that had she remained at home, Montague, who had persecuted her the whole day, would have remained also; and the hint his sister had given of the rivalry of the brothers had at once shocked and amazed her. After a moment, however, she began to fancy that her speech had more malice than meaning in it: but the uneasiness of her situation, and the necessity of soon removing from it, recurred to her more forcibly than ever. She endeavoured, as she went down stairs, to regain her composure, apprehensive that the strangers, if not the family, might remark her emotion. But she soon found that there was little to be apprehended

hended from either the one or the other: Captain Thorold was walking arm in arm before the house with Captain Musgrave, the elder of the two gentlemen, and Miss Thorold wholly monopolized the attention of Mr. Bettenson, a very young man, heir to a considerable fortune, who had a few months before, on his leaving Eton, purchased a Cornetcy of horse, very much against the inclinations of his father, whose only son he was. He could indeed give no other reason for his preference to a military life, but that he supposed it to be a very idle life, and that he should look uncommonly well in the uniform of the corps.

This however did not succeed to his wishes, though he was very far from being aware how entirely they had failed. He had a very round back, very narrow shoulders, a long forlorn face, to which the feathered helmet gave neither grace nor spirit; and the defects of his mean and ill formed figure were rendered more apparent by that dress, which is an advantage to a
well

well-made and graceful man. He had twice danced with Belle Thorold at the provincial assemblies towards the end of winter, and now, after having been in town for a few weeks, prevailed on Captain Musgrave to introduce him to a family, where he supposed he might find a *monstrous good lounge* for the rest of the time he was to be quartered in the neighbourhood. Celestina no sooner saw Miss Thorold's behaviour to this young man than she accounted at once for the dissatisfaction she had shewn at her joining the party; for she endeavoured by more than her usual vivacity to monopolize all his attention; she watched with uneasy curiosity every glance of his eye towards Celestina; and seeing that he hardly noticed her being among them, and was not struck with that beauty which the Captain and Montague had so admired, she presently reassumed her usual confidence in her own attractions, and thought only of securing the advantage she had gained.

Celestina.

Celestina, not having the remotest wish to interfere with her conquests, and being displeas'd and offended at the curious looks and whispers of the two other military men, who continued to saunter on before, was again under the necessity of listening to Montague, who never failed seizing every opportunity obliquely to hint to her the increasing admiration with which she had inspired him, though he at the same time gave her to understand that he knew he had nothing to expect but her pity and her friendship.

This was however repeated till it became very uneasy to her; and the more so, because so respectful was his address that she seldom knew how to shew resentment, and so sincere appeared his repentance, when she expressed any, that she could not long retain it.

As they now followed the rest of the party, Celestina took occasion to ask Montague for the paper she had been seized out of in the morning. "I know not,"

not," said she, on his evasive answer, "whether my folly in giving it, or your absurdity in keeping it, be the greater. Pray restore it, and let us think no more of such trifling."

"I will give you," answered he, "a copy of it, which I have already began to write; but for the original——" He stopped, and suddenly seizing her hand, pressed it to his breast; where, under his waistcoat, the paper was enfolded. "There," said he—"there is your paper. I have put it next my heart, and never shall it be displaced unless you will give me some yet dearer memorial to remain there."

Celestina withdrew her hand in confusion; and feeling more than ever the necessity of putting an end to such sort of conduct, she said, with evident displeasure and concern—"You behave, Mr. Montague, not only improperly in this foolish matter, but cruelly and insultingly towards me, who have, you know, at this time no proper home to receive me; but since you thus persecute me with conversation, from
which

which though I cannot escape, I can only bear with concern and resentment, I must as soon as possible find another temporary abode, and acknowledging all your father's kindness, quit his house."

The young man, who, amidst his wild enthusiasm, wanted neither sense nor generosity, was now shocked at her supposing he meant to insult her; and terrified at the idea of her being driven to inconvenience by leaving his father's house—"I am always offending," said he, in a voice expressive of the concern he felt, and I am afraid often wrong; but pardon me once more, Miss De Mornay, pardon and pity me, and I will not again trespass on your patience with discourse which perhaps you ought not to hear; though surely the happy Willoughby himself would not be alarmed at the hopeless admiration of a man—who knows, that he can never pretend to any other than distant and humble adoration:

"It were all one
That I should love a bright particular star."

He

He was going on, when Captain Thorold, who had imperceptibly slackened his pace, caught these words, which were spoken in a theatrical tone, and stopping with his friend, Celestina and Montague were immediately close to them. "So, Montague," said he, "at the old game. Miss De Mornay, I barr all quotations. 'Tis not fair for Montague to avail himself at once of his own talents and those of all the poets and sonnetteers he is acquainted with."

"He will avail himself of neither, Sir," answered Celestina "and I assure you I wish our conversation to become more general."

"There, Montague," cried the Captain, "you see you have tired Miss De Mornay in your tête a tête; let us see if Musgrave and I cannot more successfully entertain her."

Celestina, who did not promise herself much advantage from the change, since Captain Thorold's address to her was often

as

as warm as his brother's, but never so respectful, now hastened forward to join Miss Thorold; but she received no notice either from her or her little military beau: they were by this time however near the end of their walk, and were met by the family of Mr. Cranfield, to whom the pond belonged which they were to see fished. The children, several fine boys, now at home for their Easter holidays, were assembled round it eager and delighted. Montague, who was a great favourite in the neighbourhood, was engaged in talking with their mother and with them; while their father, having civilly noticed the whole party, entered into conversation with the gentlemen; and Miss Thorold and Mr. Bettenson still continuing to entertain each other, regardless of every body else, Celestina, who was fatigued by her walk, and still more by the uneasiness of her reflections, sat down under one of the trees which over-shadowed the pond; and her thoughts,

VOL. II.

F

which

which had long been distracted by interruptions, were immediately with Willoughby. So intirely indeed was she for some moments absorbed in reflection, that though she saw objects moving before her, and heard the shouts of the boys, the mixed voices of the party who surrounded the water, and the servants who were drawing the nets, she totally forgot where she was, and was insensible even of that want of common politeness which the whole party evinced in so entirely neglecting her. Montague, however, could not long be guilty of it; but disengaging himself from Mrs. Cranfield, who was one of those incessant talkers from whom it is difficult to escape, he came towards her; and fearful of renewing the displeasure she had so forcibly expressed a quarter of an hour before, he only named his fears that she might receive injury by sitting on the grass; to which, as she gave a cold and reluctant answer, he added a deep sigh, and

and then leaning against the tree under which she sat, he fell into a reverie as deep as her own. From this mournful silence she was roused by the sudden appearance of an horseman, who rode very fast near her, and who, on lifting up her eyes, she immediately discovered to be Vavasour.

A thousand painful sensations arose on the sight of him; though the first idea that occurred was, that he came from Willoughby. He passed her, however, without seeing her, and reaching the party who were beyond her, he gave his horse to his servant and joined them.

By the manner in which Vavasour addressed Mr. Cranfield, and the manner in which he was received by him, Celestina immediately understood that he was an expected guest. "He comes not to me," said she. "Willoughby sends no friend to me! He is far, far off! and perhaps his most intimate acquaintance may now shun as assiduously as he once sought me."

F 2

Then

958566A

Then the fears she had once entertained: that some difference of opinion had occasioned a quarrel between him and Willoughby recurred to her; and remembering how different her situation had been: when he abruptly left Alvestone, and how very cruel was the change, she grew distressed at the thoughts of meeting Vavafour, and meeting him before so many strangers: she again repented having walked out, and her soul sickened at the many uncomfortable occurrences to which she was continually exposed.

In a few moments, Vavafour, who seemed to have lost none of his vivacity, had been introduced to the Captain and Miss Thorold, but he hardly made his bow to them before he said to the latter—"Miss De Mornay is with you still, Madam; is she not?"

"With us?" replied Arabella. "Oh! yes—Miss De Mornay is with us."

"She is well I hope?" enquired Vavafour eagerly.

"You

“ You may satisfy yourself by personal enquiry,” said Mrs. Cranfield, “ for there is the young lady. She and Mr. Montague really form a very picturesque appearance.”

Vavasour, now turning his eyes on the opposite side, saw Celestina, and instantly advanced towards her with an eagerness of manner which he took no pains to check. She arose on his approach; and hardly knowing how to receive him, so various and painful were her sensations, she held out her hand to him, then withdrew it; and when he spoke to her with all that good humour with which he used to approach her in her happier days, it brought those days back to her mind so forcibly, that she could not conquer her emotion, and burst into tears. Vavasour was immediately checked; and said, with evident concern—“ My dear Miss De Mornay, the pleasure I felt in again seeing you conquered for a moment the recollection

tion of what has happened since we parted last."

"It is a subject," said Celestina, trying to recover herself, "on which I cannot now talk: yet——" and she moved a few steps forward to escape the earnest looks of Montague Thorold, which were fixed on her face—"yet I cannot help asking if you have seen your friend since——"

Vavasour, walking on with her to avoid the observation of the company, said—"Seen him? to be sure I have: I was continually with him in London all the while he remained there."

Celestina now proceeded in silence, struck with the idea that Willoughby had certainly acquainted his friend during that time with the reason of their abrupt separation. She had not, however, courage to ask him; but having wiped away the tears which a moment before filled her eyes, she turned them upon him with a look so expressive of what passed in her heart, that Vavasour, who could not misunderstand her,

her,

her, answered, as if she had spoken to him—" I do not *certainly* know the cause of George's very sudden and extraordinary change of measures ; but I have reason to believe the Castlenorths, though how I cannot tell, were the occasion of it. Though I was with him every day, I had very little conversation with him, for he always affected to be, or really was hurried if I saw him in the course of the day ; or, if towards night, complaining of fatigue, and taking laudanum, without which he said he could not sleep. When he informed me of his having left you at Alvestone without accounting for his absence, he saw my astonishment, and put an end at once to my enquiries by saying—' Vavasour, you know
' my unbounded confidence in you, and
' that any thing that related merely to my-
' self would be known to you as the first
' friend of my heart ; but do not ask me
' any questions now : I cannot answer
' them truly, and therefore, I will not be
' liable to them : even your friendship
F 4. ' and

‘ and zeal can here do me no good.’
“ This,” continued Vavasour, “ precluded all enquiry; nor could I obtain any farther satisfaction, when a few days afterwards, the very day indeed before he left London, he desired I would meet him at the chambers of Edwards, our mutual attorney, where, in spite of my resistance, he paid me the money which you know I lent him, with the interest, with as much regularity as if I had fixed that time for payment; and when I very warmly remonstrated on the unfriendly appearance this had, besought him to oblige me by keeping the money, and expressed something like resentment at his conduct, he said, with a sort of affected calmness, and almost sternly—
‘ Vavasour, I am going abroad. I may die, and I will not leave any thing between us to be settled by Lady Molyneux, who would be my heir at law; and do not you,’ added he, ‘ my good friend, get a habit of throwing your four or five thousands about you, but learn to value
‘ money

‘money a little more——’ And friends a little less, said I, interrupting him in my quick way; for that, Willoughby, is the next lesson I expect to hear from you. This money, however, Edwards shall keep till you are quite sure you do not want it. ‘I am already sure of it,’ said he ‘and, do beg, my dear Vavasour, that you will immediately pay it into the hands of the person from whom you borrowed it for my use, as the only way in which it can now contribute to my satisfaction.’ Willoughby then left me with the attorney, of whom I enquired if he could guess where he got the money; Edwards assured me he could not, as he knew nothing more of the affair than that he was that day to pay it at his chambers to me.”

This circumstance seemed, in the mind of Celestina, to confirm the notion Vavasour had started, that the Castlenorths were somehow or other the cause of Willoughby’s having left her; yet, as they could have no power over him from affection or

F 5

friendship,

friendship, their influence, if indeed they possessed any, must arise from their riches; and what was such a supposition but to believe him a sudden convert to mercenary politics, from being generous and disinterested even to excess, if such noble qualities could ever lean towards error. The mind of Celestina no sooner harboured such an idea than her heart rejected it; but all she heard from Vavasour tended only to augment her perplexity and her sorrow, which, as he perfectly understood, she saw that he would if he could have removed.

Almost afraid of asking any question, where it was easy to see he could not answer without wounding her, she acquired, after a few moments, resolution to say—
“Where, Sir, did you at last part from him? What did he then say to you?”

“I took leave of him at the hotel where he lodged, and where I had been with him for about an hour before the chaise came to the door. He was sometimes very
grave,

grave, and even dejected for a few moments, then tried by hurry and bustle to drive away his dejection. I asked him why he went to the South of France, where he had been before, rather than to Spain and Sicily, which he had often expressed an inclination to see: he answered, that he had business in France; ‘but it is more than probable,’ continued he, ‘that I may see Spain and Sicily, or Turkey for aught I know, before I return to England.’

“And did he,” enquired Celestina mournfully—“did he say nothing of me? did he not even mention me?”

“Very often,” replied Vavasour, “for indeed I forced him into the conversation.”

“Did there *need force* then?” said Celestina in a plaintive tone, and ready to melt into tears.

“Yes,” answered Vavasour; “for though I believe he thought of nothing so much, he seemed frequently unwilling to trust his voice with your name; and sometimes, after we had been speaking

of you, he sunk into a gloomy reverie, and reluctantly spoke at all. One great object of his solicitude was your future residence. He seemed however very easy while you were under Mr. Thorold's protection. Tell me, are you yourself happy in his family?"

"Happy!" said Celestina; "*can* I be *happy* any where?"

"Perhaps not just now: but you know what I mean when I use the common term *happy*. Are you satisfied with your residence? Do you mean to continue there?"

"I hardly know," sighed Celestina, "what I mean. So heavy, so unexpected was the blow that fell upon me, that my stunned senses have not yet recovered it; and for happiness—I am afraid it never can be mine."

"Well, my sweet friend, though I hope and believe otherwise, we will not talk now either of our hopes or fears: but are the family you are with pleasant people? of whom do they consist?"

"Of

“ Of Mr. Thorold, to whose worth you have heard Willoughby do justice, of his wife, his daughter, and, at present, of two sons.”

“ Yes, I see the Captain is among you.”

“ You know him then ?”

“ A little. Some friends of mine are acquainted with him. He is a man of great gallantry I have heard, and affects the very first world ; does he not ?”

“ Really I hardly know. Yes, I believe he may be that sort of man.”

“ Celebrated, I think, for having sent more young women broken hearted to Bristol than either Charles Cavendish or Ned Hervey. That is the sort of praise that attracts your hearts, while we rattle-headed fellows, who are very honest though not very refined, who say no more than we mean, and address you—not as goddesses, only to laugh at you for believing us, but as mere mortal women, are called rakes and libertines and I know not what ; as if twenty such careless, I had almost said harmless,

harmless, lads as we are, do half as much mischief as one of those plausible, sentimental, fighting sycophants, who mean nothing but the gratification of their own paltry vanity."

" Bless me, Mr. Vavasour," cried Celestina, won a moment from her own anguish by this odd remark, " you seem as much discomposed as if the redoubtable Captain had sent some favourite of your own to Bristol."

" No, upon my soul—my favourites—I speak pretty plainly you know: *my acquaintance* have in every instance *but one* lain among people, not easily sent to Bristol. Come now don't affect prudery. I tell you though, Celestina, that had such a fellow sent a sister of mine to recover health, ruined by the disappointment of expectations he had raised, I believe I should try if I could not stop his career."

" It is fortunate then, perhaps, for the Captain, that you have no sister."

" I may,

“ I may, however, have friends,” added he, earnestly fixing his eyes on the face of Celestina—“ I may have friends, for whom I may be as much interested as I could be for the nearest relation; and them I would put upon their guard.”

“ I would very fain misunderstand you,” said Celestina, “ because I think you ought to know that, situated as I am, I need no such precaution: or you must have a mean opinion of me indeed, if, knowing Mr. Willoughby, you can suppose that she who has once been attached to him, can throw away a thought upon Captain Thorold?”

“ Aye that’s true—all very true and very fine; but look ye, my dear Celestina, I’ve no way of judging of others but from myself, and (though to be sure I don’t speak from experience in these honourable sentimental sort of treaties) I am confoundedly afraid that had I been engaged to Helen, and found that by some cursed counter stroke of fortune her
divinityship

divinityship was not to be had, that after a little raving and swearing and scampering about the world to get her out of my head, I should have fallen in love with—”

“ With Andromache,” said Celestina, helping him to a comparison, and smiling.

“ Oh no!” answered he, “ she was too wise and too melancholy for me: your weeping and tragical beauties would make me cry, but never could make me love. Faith I think Briseis or Chryseis would have been more to my taste.”

“ Or Cressida perhaps?”

“ Oh! she would have suited me exactly.”

“ Well, Sir!” said Celestina, re-assuming her gravity, “ you undoubtedly follow the golden rule in judging of others; but give me leave to assure you that in the present instance it would mislead you, and that you are the only man in the world from whom I could listen to such a supposition without resentment. You, however, do not, I know, mean to hurt me.”

“ No,

“No, that I don't by heaven, cried he, kissing her hand, “and so do now tell me how and when I can see you again.”

“I cannot tell; since it probably depends on your stay in this country.”

“That depends then upon you.”

“Upon me!”

“Yes, upon you: for I came down with no other intention in the world than to enquire after and see you; and for that purpose only have consented to undergo the company of Cranfield and his wife: very good sort of people indeed, but confounded bores; who have invited me down these two years, and whose invitation nothing but their being within four miles of Thorold's would have made me accept.”

Celestina was at a loss what answer to make to this, because she did not know whether he meant to impute his solicitude to the care he took of Willoughby's interest, or simply to his friendship for her, for of any warmer interest than friendship she had not the remotest idea. She had, however,

however, no time to answer, for Montague Thorold, who had followed them with his eyes ever since they parted from the rest of the company, now came hastily on towards them to say his sister was returning home.

Celestina rejoined them immediately; and after Mr. and Mrs. Cranfield and their guest had been invited and consented to dine with the Thorold family the next day, they separated, Vavasour betraying a violent inclination to attend Celestina home, and seeming to repress it with great difficulty from the habit he was in of doing whatever pleased himself without considering whither what he did was, according to the established forms of the world, rude or polite. He felt, however, that to quit his hospitable friends on the moment of his arrival would be carrying his carelessness a little too far; and therefore after lingering as long as he could, he reluctantly left her to Montague Thorold, who had walked silently by her for some moments, and wished her a good day.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VI.

CELESTINA, in whose mind a thousand painful thoughts had been revived by this interview, was too much lost in them to attend to Montague Thorold, who still in silent dejection walked by her, while his brother was engaged with Arabella and his military friends. Montague had narrowly watched her the whole time she had been conversing with Vavasour; and, though hopeless himself, could not see her receive another with such an appearance of interest as he had remarked towards Vavasour, without mortification. "Mr. Vavasour," said he at last, "for that I think is the gentleman's name—Mr. Vavasour is an old acquaintance of yours?"

"A very

“A very particular friend of Mr. Willoughby’s,” replied she; “and of course a friend of mine.”

“A single man I suppose?”

“I believe so,” said Celestina; “at least I never heard he was married; and you see he has not a very sober, married look.”

“No really, very much otherwise. But he does not seem to have communicated any portion of his gaiety to you.”

“I am not indeed greatly disposed to be gay,” said Celestina; “and since I am not merry, would it not be as well to be wise. Do, Mr. Montague, give me that silly paper: its detension is useless to you and disagreeable to me.”

“Pardon me then if for once I am guilty of what offends you. I cannot part with it. But it is my first and shall be my last offence.

“I hope so,” said Celestina very gravely. “The thing is in itself of no consequence,

consequence, and I wonder you should be so childishly anxious to keep it."

"Your hands have touched it; your letters are upon it; you composed the lines."

"Well, Sir," cried she impatiently, and willing to put an end to a speech to which she feared the Captain might listen; "since you will not give it me or destroy it, the only favour I have to ask is, that you will never speak of it again, either to me or any other person."

"A needless precaution!" exclaimed he, "a very needless precaution is the latter; and, alas! in the former I cannot trespass long, for in a few days, a very few days, I return to Oxford, and I shall then be no more liable to excite your displeasure: you will cease to recollect that such a being exists."

"No indeed," said Celestina; whoever is dear to Mr. Thorold, to your father, to whom I am so much obliged, must have
a claim.

a claim to my recollection and my good wishes.

“ Oh ! how cold does that sound from those lips,” said he, “ and how little those expressive eyes are calculated to talk of mere good wishes. They are so enchanting when they say more, when they look as they did just now on Mr. Vavasour; How I envied him the simple ‘ God bless you !’ and—‘ Adieu, Mr. Vavasour,’ and the look that accompanied them.”

“ Ridiculous !” cried Celestina. “ Really, Mr. Montague, the style to which you have accustomed yourself destroys all conversation. If however that adieu was so enviable, I will bid you farewell with quite as much sincerity. God bless you, and adieu, Mr. Montague. They were now very near home, and Celestina, hastening forward, crossed the garden by a nearer way and reached her own room.

She there began once more to meditate on her situation. Every day that she had passed at Mr. Thorold’s house had en-
creased

increased her desire to leave it, and she now more than ever regretted that she knew not whither to go. Her concern was increased by a note brought to her from the neighbouring village, from whence she had early that morning sent to her former abode at Thorpe Heath to enquire whether, if she had occasion for them, she could again have her former lodgings: the answer imported that the old man and his wife had died within a few days of each other, the week before, and that the house now belonged to one of the sons, who had a large family of his own, and intended to remove into it himself, as being more convenient than his former habitation.

This forlorn hope being entirely over, her reflections on her situation became more painful, since she now knew not one place in the world where she could with propriety go. She had once or twice consulted Cathcart on the subject; who not being aware of the circumstances which rendered her present abode uneasy

to her, and knowing how much Willoughby desired her to continue there, rather discouraged than promoted any scheme for her removal; flattering himself, that the time was not far distant when her presence would give, in the opinion of Jessy and his own, a charm to the house they hoped to call their own.

Celestina was well aware of his reasons for wishing her to remain where she was, and did not love to explain her's for desiring to remove, lest she should appear at once fastidious and vain. She could not relate to Cathcart, what after all might be fancy, that Mrs. Thorold did not love her though she was civil to her; that Miss Thorold beheld her sometimes with dislike and never with friendship; and that of the two brothers, the elder often affected to entertain her with conversation, such as, though she could not directly complain of it, she could not hear without being offended and mortified; while the younger never ceased pursuing her

her

her with declarations of romantic attachment, less disgusting, but equally if not more improper for her to listen to.

In Mr. Thorold she had always a steady friend and a disinterested adviser; but to him she could not state the reasons that made his house uncomfortable and his kindness useless, nor complain that his wife and daughter slighted, or his sons made love to her; and though he possessed a very uncommon share of discernment, he seemed determined not to perceive either himself. On no plan of removal, however, could she at present determine, and had fixed on nothing but to find an opportunity to hint her discontent to Vavasour, when she was called down to dinner.

The two military strangers were gone; but Celestina found they were engaged to dine there the next day with the Cranfield family and Mr. Vavasour; and Mrs. Thorold, who piqued herself above all other things on giving as good entertainments

as some of her neighbours who kept men cooks, was so impatient to prepare for the dinner of the next day, that she would hardly give herself time to eat what of the present, but hurried away to her store room the instant the cloth was removed. Arabella had yet a more important concern to attend to; Mr. Bettenson had been so lavish of his compliments, which were indeed the only sort of conversation *he* was at all perfect in, that she had no doubt of having made, if not an absolute conquest, at least such an impression on his heart as another interview would make indelible; and though his extravagant praises, and the heavy language of two rolling black eyes, (which in lustre and shape Montague compared to two pickled walnuts,) had not so far blinded the judgment of Arabella but that she saw he was extremely weak, she considered his great fortune, and that if he could not lead, he would probably submit to be driven, for which she thought she had all possible talents

ents and was sure she had all possible inclination. He had not a title indeed, but was the third or fourth cousin of a man that had; of course he was a man of family himself; and had he not been so, had his birth been mean and his person less tolerable, his fortune would not have suffered her a moment to consider either as of any consequence. But though she entertained a very great inclination, and a very well grounded hope to secure Bettenson, she had not the least objection to make an experiment at the same time on Vavafour, who had a still better fortune with a very handsome figure; and who she had heard described, as one of those agreeable rakes, who are blamed and loved by all their acquaintance. She had heard too that he declared himself not to be a marrying man; the greater therefore would be her glory, should she happen to charm him into other sentiments; and when she looked in the glass she thought nothing more probable. As to Celestina, besides

her engagements with Willoughby, she considered her as quite out of the question. Neither Captain Musgrave or Bettenfon had taken any notice of her, and the latter had declared he thought her far from handsome. Arabella therefore saw nothing to impede her success; and even fancied, that as she intended to be infinitely lively and entertaining, the melancholy air and pensive face of Celestina would produce a contrast extremely to her advantage. While her mother therefore was busy with her jelly and custards, Arabella was preparing her artillery against the hearts of her expected guests; and Celestina, who dared not venture out lest she should meet Montague Thorold, who had placed himself where she could not escape him, remained the whole evening alone in her own room, where she formed a sketch of the letter she intended to write to Willoughby.

This employment, by fixing her thoughts entirely on the object which broke in upon every
every

every other that at any time of necessity engaged them, quieted and soothed her spirits; she forgot every thing but her wish to convince him of her unfailing attachment, and to pour out before him a heart that was entirely his own. She determined, however, not to finish her letter till after she had talked to Vavasour; and then recollected that she could not tell Willoughby the result of that conference, without assigning her reasons for desiring to quit a protection where he had himself directed her to remain. This was an irksome task to her: for if he should happen to think her objections frivolous, he would be displeased that for those she removed, and if he thought them just, the idea of rivalry would add to the uneasiness which she knew her unsettled situation would occasion to him. Thus undetermined, she could rest on nothing but the hope that Vavasour might from his dislike to one or other of the Thorolds, (for he was too frequently extremely fastidious and disliked

. G .

with

with all his heart) agree with her in the necessity there was for her change of abode, without enquiring into all the reasons that made her desire it.

By the bustle she heard below in the housekeeper's room, which was under part of her's, and by the frequent running up and down of Arabella's maid, and the universal hurry of the household, except Mr. Thorold, who on these occasions retired to his study for the evening, Celestina found she should rather accommodate than offend if she declined supping below. She sent down a note therefore, saying she was much fatigued with her morning's walk, and begged to be excused for the evening, and received a verbal answer that Mrs. Thorold desired she would do as was most agreeable to her. Montague, however, who despairing of her coming out to walk, had at last sauntered away alone, no sooner found on his return that he was not to see her at supper, than he went up himself, and

and tapping softly at the door, enquired if she was not well?

“ Oh! perfectly well,” said she, “ but tired by my walk of this morning, and not disposed to eat any supper.”

“ Surely,” cried he, “ if you are tired you should eat something. You did not drink tea, and yet will have no supper: let me get something for you?”

Celestina declined this however as politely as she could; but Montague was not to be repulsed so easily. He went down therefore, and returning in a few minutes, entreated her to open the door and take some of the wine and water he had brought her. Distressed by civility, which it seemed so rude to refuse and so painful to accept, she hesitated a moment, and then opened the door, when taking one of the glasses she thanked him and would have wished him good night; but he looked earnestly in her face—“ Ah!” said he, “ tears! you have been weeping again! always in tears! You have been writing too—writing to the fortunate Willoughby?”

“ Pray don't tease me so,” cried Celestina: “ if I have cause for tears, you should remember that the greatest kindness you can do me is permitting me to indulge them; and it signifies not who I write to.”

“ It signifies no more indeed,” said Montague, with a deep drawn sigh, “ than as it excites my envy and my regret.”

“ Well, well, good night to you,” interrupted Celestina. “ Pray don't let me keep you from supper.”

“ Oh !” said he, putting his foot within the door so as to prevent her shutting it, “ I have had my supper. One look suffices me :

“ Loose now and then

“ A scatter'd smile, and that I'll live upon.”*

Ah! you remember those delicious lines of that most elegant of our English poetesses :

“ It is to be all bathed in tears ;

“ To live upon a smile for years ;

* Shakspeare.

“ Te

" To lie whole ages at a beauty's feet ;
 " To kneel, to languish, to implore,
 " And still, tho' she disdain, adore.
 " It is to do all this, and think thy sufferings
 " sweet."*

Shall I go on? for the whole of that
 beautiful song is exactly descriptive of my
 feelings :

" It is to hope, tho' hope were lost,
 " Tho' heaven and earth thy passion-croft:"

But you are angry ?"

" I am at least tired," said Celestina,
 " and must beg you would no longer de-
 tain me."

" Give me your hand then in token
 that we part in peace.

Ma poi di pace in pegno
 La bella man mi diè. †

" There, Sir," said Celestina coldly;

* Mrs. Barbauld.

† Metastasio.

“ there is my hand, and now good night.”

“ Oh that I dared seal my forgiveness upon it,” cried he, eagerly pressing it.

“ But I dare not.”

Celestina withdrew her hand, and again repeating a cold good night, he at length permitted her to shut the door.

These frequent declarations, which she could not affect to misunderstand, greatly disturbed her; and so well aware was she of the impropriety of suffering them, that she was determined no consideration should induce her to remain another week, if Mr. Montague was not really returning within that time to Oxford. She had heard him repeatedly laughed at by his father, his brother, and his sister, for his paroxysms of love: if his present attention to her was only a return of the fit, she felt herself degraded by being made the object of it; and if it was more serious, she thought herself to blame to suffer his assiduities, on account

account of his father, though she knew not very well how to put an end to them. Much less appearance of passion would have made many young women believe him ready to take the lover's leap, or to apply laudanum or gunpowder as a remedy; but Celestina, though not unconscious of her personal advantages, had none of that overweening vanity which makes so many of inferior attractions fancy themselves irresistible, nor any of that unfeeling coquetry, which would be gratified by the despair of a man capable of real attachment: she wished to put an end to Montague's persecuting admiration, both for his sake and her own; and after some reflections, concluded, that it would be better to take an opportunity of speaking to him the next day, and declaring to him that his extravagant behaviour would compel her to quit the house and lose the acquaintance of his family; for she thought, notwithstanding all his romantic flights, he had so much good sense, that he would see

the impropriety, and indeed the cruelty of his conduct, if it were once fairly represented to him. She now almost repented that she had not listened with more patience to the boasting egotism of the Captain, and had taken shelter from his equivocal compliments in the more agreeable because more literary conversation of Montague; and again she reflected, with bitterness of heart, that whether Montague went or stayed, his brother's character, and indeed his manners towards her, made her remaining where she was extremely improper; yet that no eligible situation offered: and for the first time, since she had left Lady Molyneux, she formed a half wish to be again with her, though she knew she had there little kindness and no real friendship to expect.

CHAPTER VII.

THE preparations for a splendid dinner succeeded admirably, and Mrs. Thorold was in high good humour when her guests arrived. Arabella was still better pleased; for Bettenson, immediately on his entrance, had protested that she never looked so well in her life, and Musgrave whispered to her, that “if she minded her hits she would be sure of the pretty boy,” for so he, the Cornet, was termed by his Captain. Intelligence so conveyed would have disgusted and offended a young woman of delicacy, but Belle Thorold was too eager for conquest, and too resolutely bent on securing a man of fortune, to feel or to resent the freedom of this address from Musgrave, to whose praises of her she

she knew much of the attention of Bettenson was owing. Mr. and Mrs. Cranfield and Vavasour soon after arrived; and Celestina saw with surprise the pains Miss Thorold took at once to attract the notice of Vavasour, and increase the admiration of Bettenson. She had never before seen her in the company of young unmarried men of fortune, and now observed with concern how totally she defeated her own purpose. She threw herself into numberless attitudes which she fancied becoming; applied her hand incessantly to rectify a curl, or adjust her necklace, by which she thought to display it's beauty as well as that of her hair, and her throat, which she had been taught to fancy eminently handsome. She whispered about nothing, laughed at some joke which nobody understood but herself and Musgrave, then affected to be angry at something he said to her, then talked to him by signs across the table, and by way of being charming was rude and childish. But this sort of
behaviour

behaviour she had seen practised by some very fashionable young women; it was perfectly adapted to the level of Bettenson's capacity; and she had not judgment enough to see that it must offend any man who had either good sense or good breeding.

Vavasour, who in the presence of Celestina would have seen perfect beauty or extraordinary merit with indifference, took no other notice of Arabella than just served him to remark to Celestina that she was one of the most conceited and pert girls he had ever seen. This served, as they walked after tea in the garden, to introduce the discourse she wished to hold with him: but it was extremely difficult to escape a moment from the vigilant assiduity of Montague Thorold. "Pray," said she to Vavasour, "pray be more guarded: her brother will hear you."

"And that brother," said he, somewhat abruptly, "you seem very much afraid of offending, though he seems to

me to be a puppy; how can you let him prate to you as he does?"

"Indeed," replied Celestina, "you would not dislike him if you knew him; and it is amazing to me that you, who are really so good humoured, should take such dislikes to people before you can possibly know them."

"And when I do know them I often dislike them more. Why now, in this family, who is there but the father that has any understanding, and he has too much of the priest about him. But here comes your highflying Oxonian. Surely it's hard not to have a moment with you, though I want to talk to you about Willoughby."

"I will speak to Mr. Montague," said she, "and tell him so." She then stepped back a few paces, and meeting Montague Thorold, who was approaching to join them, she told him that Mr. Vavasour had something to communicate to her on behalf of their mutual friend Willoughby, and that she should esteem herself obliged
to

to him if he would prevent their being interrupted for a few moments.

Montague, with a melancholy and submissive look, laid his hand on his heart and said—"One word from you is enough to him who lives but to obey you." He then went back to the rest of the party, casting a wistful look after Celestina, who, turning into another walk with Vavasour, said eagerly—"Well, and now what have you to say to me from Willoughby? have you heard from him?"

"No," replied Vavasour; "I could not well do that since yesterday, nor do I indeed expect it for some time to come: but do you know, Miss De Mornay, that I consider myself as Willoughby's representative, as a sort of guardian to you, and am going in that character to talk to you very seriously."

"Well," cried Celestina, conscious that her own conduct was irreproachable, "my sage guardian and reverend monitor,
begin

begin then with your remonstrance or exhortation, whichever it is to be."

"You must give me leave to be serious on this occasion," answered he.

"Most willingly," replied Celestina, interrupting him; "and the more so because I never remember in all our former conversations to have had one serious discourse with you, and I long to see how you acquit yourself."

"I don't like the people you are with," said he, "and wish you were any where else."

"I wish I were any where else myself; yet I like the family, and believe them to be very good sort of people."

"Come, come, Celestina, you cannot be ignorant of what I mean: Captain Thorold, as I told you yesterday, is that dangerous and hateful character, a male coquet."

"He never coquets with me I assure you," said she, "for I never give him an opportunity."

"No,

“No, because at present his brother has the advantage of him. If you do not coquet with the military man, at least you listen to the scholar, and it may be he is the most dangerous of the two. It is the general idea of the country that he is in love with you; that——

“The general idea of the country!” cried Celestina; “how can the country possibly know any thing about him or about me?”

“My dear friend,” interrupted Vavafour, “you cannot be ignorant that in these places the people could not exist if their curiosity did not keep their idleness from total stagnation. They will talk, and let them about one another, but I won’t have them talk of you, who are of another order of beings: in short, I am jealous of you *for my friend*, and don’t like to hear that Lord Castlenorth has paid off all Willoughby’s incumbrances, and that he has procured him the reversion of his titles, to engage him to break off his connection with

with you, which it is said he formed before he came of age, and therefore thought himself obliged to fulfil."

Celestina cried with great emotion—
"Dear Sir! but how false and foolish is all this."

"It is so," resumed Vavafour; "and what follows is equally or more so, yet it is I find generally believed."

"And what is it?"

"Why that Willoughby, having scruples about suddenly leaving you, and leaving you in comparative indigence, Lord Castlenorth has given you five thousand pounds; which, with what was before left you by Mrs. Willoughby, and the promise of a very considerable living in the gift of the Castlenorth's to a clergyman if you marry one, have rendered you a desirable object in Mr. Thorold's eyes as a wife for his youngest son, whom finally you have accepted of, and are to be married to very soon; as Miss Fitz-Hayman has insisted upon this before she gives her hand to her
cousin,

cousin, which is also to happen very soon in Italy."

"Miss Fitz-Hayman!" said Celestina, turning pale; "and pray, my good Vavasour, where have you learned this legend?"

"In London," replied he, "I collected enough to make me uneasy about your situation. I picked up more since I came down to Cranfields, for his wife is a gossip of the first pretensions; and as to the Fitz-Hayman part of the story, their going abroad so soon after Willoughby has, I take it for granted, confirmed it in the opinion of every body."

"Are they gone abroad then?" said Celestina.

"So say the newspapers; and I fancy rightly." He then took one from his pocket and read this paragraph:

Dover, April 26, 17—

"Yesterday Lord and Lady Castle-

"north, and their daughter, the Hon.

"Miss

“ Miss Fitz-Hayman, with a great retinue,
“ sailed from hence on their way to the
“ South of Europe.”

Celestina was silent a moment; for not all her faith on the unchangeable affections of her lover could guard her from a momentary shock: recovering herself however, she said—“ They may be, and I suppose *are* gone; but—certainly—certainly Mr. Willoughby had no share in their going. You surely do not think he had? As we know some part—great part of what you have heard, to be utterly false and unfounded, why may it not all be so? Certainly you do not believe any of it.”

“ Pardon me,” answered Vavasour, “ I believe that this young man, this Montague Thorold, is what they call in love with you; for the rest, I know some of it is false, and I believe the greatest part of it is so.”
—“ Gracious heaven! you have doubts then, Vavasour: doubts whether Willoughby— But it is impossible you *can*
doubt

doubt it. You know he is all honour, generosity, integrity, and goodness."

"I know I always thought so, or I should not have loved him better than any man breathing. But don't let me alarm you; I cannot doubt when I recollect all I ever knew of my friends: yet I very honestly tell you, that the mystery he made to me of his reasons for going abroad, the gloomy reveries in which I so often saw him, his evident struggles with himself, and a thousand odd circumstances which struck me when we were last together—upon my soul, Celestina, I know not what to think, and should deceive you were I to tell you that I have no doubts: yet they arise rather from my mistrust of human nature in general than my opinion of George as an individual: but when I look at you, and remember that he was within one day of calling you his, I cannot upon any common principles account for his conduct, and am sure that no common motives can justify it."

Celestina,

Celestina, whose heart sunk within her while it could not deny the justice of this remark, sighed deeply, but remained silent ; and Vavasour went on—" Be *his* motives, however, what they may, it is certainly your determination to wait the event of this mysterious journey?"

" It is certainly," said she faintly.

" Well then, is there not any more eligible situation for you than one where you are the subject of such reports as I have just repeated to you? Suppose, if it be only for supposition sake, they were to reach Willoughby : if he still loves you——"

" If!" repeated Celestina ; " good heaven! you believe then that it admits of a question."

" I did not mean to hurt you. But my dear Celestina, there is nothing so insecure as our affections I am afraid ; and you must recollect too many instances of their change to suppose it *quite* impossible that——"

" Well, I will interrupt you no more. If then—if Willoughby still loves me——"

" He

“ He will suffer extremely from such a report ; and should—though I allow it to be very improbable—*should* any change have happened, your apparent approbation of Montague Thorold will justify that caprice which nothing else *can* justify.”

“ Ah ! Vavasour,” said Celestina, in faltering accents, “ I see, I too evidently see, that you believe your friend is lost to me for ever, and that all you have now said is merely to prepare me for a blow, which, if it fell on me suddenly, would, you think, destroy me ; but believe me, Vavasour, believe me, suspense such as I have long endured—such as I at this moment endure—is, I *think*, more insupportable than any certainty could be, unless it were the certainty that Willoughby is more miserable than I am : that I think I could not bear : but for the rest, however I *might* suffer in my pride or in my love, I trust that my mind would in time be reconciled to whatever is inevitable ; and perhaps,” continued she, struggling with the violent
VOL. II. H emotion

emotion she felt—"perhaps that very pride might assist me to cure the anguish of disappointed and improperly indulged affection. But yet it is surely impossible Willoughby *can* have acted as these suspicions in regard to Miss Fitz-Hayman would make me imagine, and still write as he writes to me! However, Vavasour, I again entreat you, if you know more than I do, to conceal nothing from me through misplaced and needless tenderness."

"You know me very little," answered Vavasour, "or you would know how little concealment and dissimulation are in my nature. My dear Miss De Mornay, I have faithfully related to you all I know of our friend, and even my half formed doubts I have not attempted to conceal from you: be now equally ingenuous with me, and tell me, whether you think your present situation is either the most pleasant or the most eligible you could possibly choose."

"It is not pleasant," answered Celestina, "because I am not mistress of my time; but

but it is eligible surely, because Willoughby himself in some measure placed me in it, and it is to his wishes I am to attend while he is yet interested about me, and not to the vague and unfounded reports of people who care nothing whether I am happy or miserable, so long as they have something to talk of."

"But reflect a moment whether Willoughby, when he mentioned his desire of your continuing here, was aware that Captain Thorold would *therefore* remain at home all the summer, or that Montague Thorold would chuse to make you the object of his romantic passion, and the subject of his poetical panegyric: you cannot but know that he does both; and were *you* wilfully blind to it, his behaviour to-day would have sufficiently convinced *me*."

Celestina could not deny his extreme particularity in company, and his private declarations were less equivocal: without however acknowledging either to Vavasour, she said in general, that for many reasons

she should not be displeas'd to change her residence if she knew whither to go.

Vavasour then began to lament that he had no mother, no sister, of whose friendly reception of her he could be assur'd; "but," added he, "my dear Miss De Mornay, give me a day or two, and some proper place will perhaps occur to me, or rather to an excellent female friend whom I will apply to. In the mean time I will see Cathcart, as I propose to ride over to Alvestone to-morrow, and we will talk the business over together." He then took her hand, and in a manner more tender and less lively than was usual with him, asked her if she would pardon him for any thing he might have said to give her pain. Celestina assur'd him she could not forgive because she had never been offend'd, but that she must ever be greatly oblig'd to him for the friendly part he had taken; and when, fearing that some invidious remarks might be made by the company they had left if they were any longer absent, she desired

Vavasour

Vavasour to rejoin them, while she went for a few moments to her own room to recover from the still apparent emotion which she had been thrown into from what had passed.

She had hardly, however, time to breathe before she saw Montague Thorold walking anxiously on the lawn before her windows, looking towards them as if he knew she was returned to her apartment, and almost immediately afterwards Mr. Cranfield's carriage drove up to the door to take them home. Celestina now, therefore, composing herself as well as she was able, hastened down to the company, who, except Montague and Vavasour, were hardly conscious of her rejoining them: Mr. Cranfield being busied in giving to the elder Mr. Thorold a long detail of a cause that had been lately decided at the sessions in which he had a principal share; Mrs. Thorold and Mrs. Cranfield engaged in settling the affairs of the neighbourhood, and comparing notes on the frequency of

H 3 Mr. Langly,

Mr. Langly, the curate's visits to Mrs. Poole, the widow of a rich farmer, a matter in which these good ladies were mightily interested; while Miss Thorold was violently flirting with Bettenson; and the other two military men walking together, were talking over their former adventures, and Musgrave laughing at Captain Thorold for being thrown out, as he termed it, by his brother with Celestina. "What the devil," said he, "d'ye bury yourself alive in this manner for, if Montague is to supplant you? Faith, my dear Edmund, 'tis so much against the honour of us all, that if you don't make more progress I shall try what I can do myself. Don't you see that her attachment to Willoughby is all stuff, and that she throws out her lure for this Vavasour? If you like her, what a cursed fool you must be to let her slip through your fingers."

"As to liking," replied Captain Thorold, "you don't suppose I intend to
commit

commit matrimony. The girl is handsome, and has more sense than most of them—”

“ And therefore 'tis more worth a man's while to make a fool of her. There I perfectly agree with you ; for, though, if I were condemned by any devilish mischance to marry, I should dread nothing so much as one of your sensible women, yet it is glorious to see how a little foolish flattery can set the sense of the shrewdest of them at nought. But by the way, Edmund, how did you get off with that business in Ireland ?”

“ Which ? for I had so much business upon my hands that I don't know what you mean.”

“ Why, between you and Miss O'Brien : was there not an impertinent brother or—”

“ Oh ! aye poor Fanny O'Brien. 'Twas the old story : Fanny was very pretty, and faith I was very fond of being with them all, for there were three others, all sweet little dears. Their mother, a good sort of a widow, was a little upon the *qui vive*

when she heard I had a fortune and so forth, and somehow or other I lived a good deal at the house, and talked nonsense to the girls in my way you know, till this Miss Fanny took it into her head to fancy herself in love with me, and to suppose I had told her that I was so with her, though if I did upon my soul 'twas only by implication. I dangled to be sure, and dined and danced with her; but I meant nothing, and was obliged at last to tell her mother so, who very plainly signified to me, one evening after I had passed the day with them, that it was time to understand me. Well, I gave her to understand then, as civilly as I could though, for faith they were a good sort of a family, that I had no thoughts of marrying, and the good gentlewoman waxed wrath about it, and told me I had done a very unhand-some thing in winning her daughter's affections. I could only lament they were so easily won, and return them undamaged by me. Something I said, however, gave
Mrs. O'Brien

Mrs. O'Brien offence, and she desired to see me no more; a prohibition which I of course did not attempt to disobey; and some other pretty girl falling in my way, faith I thought no more of my poor Fanny, till being one night at an assembly at Dublin, I saw a great bustle soon after my entrance, and was told that Miss O'Brien had fainted away upon seeing me, and was gone home extremely ill. 'Twas no fault of mine you know that the girl was so simply susceptible: but her brother, a fierce young sailor, who came a day or two afterwards from his ship, thought otherwise, and talking to me rather cavalierly, we agreed that the matter must be settled in the Phoenix Park by a brace of pistols. *Un beau jour* we accordingly met there, and exchanged each a couple of shot with all possible politeness, in which it was my fortune to lodge a bullet in the flesh of his left arm, which was immediately extracted. I heard there was no danger; and as he was of course satisfied, I came

off to England the next day, having taken my passage some time before."

"Your folks here at home never heard of the hazard you ran?"

"No, I believe not. My father is a little too apt to lecture and preach on such occasions, and so 'tis as well sunk I believe; and since I've been in England faith I've had no inclination to amuse myself in the same way, nor indeed any opportunity, except with this Celestial beauty, and she don't seem to take to me."

"The greater will be the glory," replied Musgrave. "I own I should like of all things, were I you, to drive out a solemn, settled, sentimental affection from such a heart as her's, and jockey your brother Montague."

Here the gentlemen were interrupted by the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Cranfield and Vavasour; after which Musgrave and Bettenfon took leave themselves, having first received a general invitation from Mrs. Thorold and her daughter; who, though

though by no means pleased to observe that Vavasour, entirely occupied by Celestina, had beheld and heard her with frigid indifference, was yet much consoled by being almost certain that she had secured the heart of the little Cornet. She judged very right. Musgrave, to whose care the father of Bettenson had recommended him, had purposely introduced him to Arabella Thorold, under the idea of detaching him from two milleners, to both of whom he had been making very serious love ever since his residence at Exeter; and the elder Mr. Bettenson was so desirous of saving him from a connection of that kind, which he was thus likely to form, that he no sooner heard of his growing partiality to Miss Thorold, than he entreated Captain Musgrave by every possible means to encourage it, declaring that fortune alone was no object to him, and that he should consider himself happy if his son was fixed in his choice of the daughter of so worthy and respectable a man as Mr. Thorold.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE short remainder of the evening past very unpleasantly to Celestina while she continued in company, for Montague, to whom she could not prevail upon herself to be rude, was yet so dissatisfied, either from the constraint he observed she wore towards him, or from her long conference with Vavasour, that he could not conceal his concern, and sighed so loud and so long, as to attract notice and some very acrimonious speeches from his mother. Mr. Thorold too, she thought, looked uneasy, and Arabella evidently disliked her more than before; while the Captain's rude examination of her countenance, from which she always shrunk, was now more painful to her than ever. She got away as soon

as

as possible ; but was far, very far from finding repose in solitude. All that Vavasour had said now returned to torture her ; and instead of finding sleep when she retired to her pillow, the same uneasy thoughts and harrassing conjectures which had long rendered it of difficult acquirement, had now received such a reinforcement as made it impossible for her to sleep at all.

She rose with the dawn of day, hoping she might in the course of it see Cathcart ; and yet from him she had little to expect as to her removal, unless he could find for her some farm house in the neighbourhood of Jessy, where she might have board and lodging. But even to this scheme there were objections : it would be too near the Thorolds' : the young men might still visit her, and the reports still obtain which Vavasour had repeated to her ; because, though Montague was really, she found, returning to Oxford in a few days, there would be other occasions of his being at home. It
was

was also too near Alvestone, which, since she almost despaired now of seeing again with pleasure, she wished to escape seeing even at the distance from which she frequently beheld it; when the clump of firs and some of the high grounds in the park, conspicuous from almost every part of the country within ten or fifteen miles, often drew from her heart many a bitter sigh.

About eight o'clock, she saw Cathcart enter the little lawn before the house, and immediately went down to him. He approached her with more than ordinary cheerfulness; but in answering her questions told her he had not heard from Mr. Willoughby.

"I flattered myself you had," said Celestina, sinking again into dejection, "for I thought, Cathcart, you seemed unusually cheerful."

"If any thing could make me long so," replied he, "when you, my dear Madam, and my noble friend are divided and uneasy,

easy, it would be the intelligence I have received about my sister, whose situation, you know, and my solicitude for her and her children, was indeed the only one Mr. Willoughby's goodness would have left me, if he had himself been as happy as he deserved to be."

"And what then have you heard," enquired Celestina, "of Mrs. Elphinstone?"

"That her husband, who has been long wandering about the world, is at length settled, in a very remote situation indeed, but one which he happens to like, and which is likely to become profitable. He is appointed to superintend the fisheries established by a society of gentlemen in the western islands of Scotland, and is already put in possession of a good house in the isle of Skie. Thither my sister is about to follow him; but I have prevailed upon her to send to me her two youngest children, whom I shall put to nurse in some farm house where Jessy or I can visit them every day: the other two are

as many as it will be possible for her to take care of, and when she is settled, I have engaged to conduct the little ones to her. She has already received money from Elphinstone to enable her to set out well equipped, and waits only to see me before she takes leave of London, and, she says, she hopes for ever."

"And when do you go?"

"I propose setting out for London on Thursday, unless you or Mr. Willoughby have any commands for me that may detain me longer."

"Alas! Cathcart," said Celestina, "I am afraid you will receive no intelligence of Willoughby by that time: but I can find, I believe, something for you to do for me which will rather expedite than detain you."

Cathcart then assuring her how happy every opportunity of shewing his gratitude would make him, Celestina said—"Well: then, my commands are simply these, that: instead of going on horseback you come
hither

hither in a post-chaise on Thursday morning, and take me with you to see my dear Jessy, as I cannot go without having that satisfaction, and afterwards, Cathcart, you shall take me to London with you."

Cathcart expressing some surprise at her resolution, she told him that she would account for it as they went; that Devonshire was at present very unpleasant to her, and that she fancied change of place would relieve her spirits more than all her reason and her philosophy, "which, to tell you the truth, Cathcart," said she, "may be accused of acting a little like Horatio; and I sometimes am tempted to say to them—

" Is then the boasted purpose of your friendship

" To tell Calista what a wretch she is?

" Alas! what needed that?"

But however, I find really, Cathcart, that I cannot here obey our dear friend in the points he most insists upon, those of keeping my cheerfulness and preserving my health, and I have a mind to try his
remedy

remedy, and ramble a little. Perhaps I may go to Scotland with your sister. Do you think she would admit me as a travelling companion?"

"Admit you, dear Madam," said Cathcart. "Surely she would be but too much honoured. But you can never be serious?"

"It is, however, very likely that I may become so. At present, my resolution is to take leave of this family and go with you to London. You will see Vavasour to day, and you may tell him so."

They then settled the hour at which the post-chaise was to be ready for her the next morning save one. Cathcart returned to Alvestone; and Celestina to the house, where she proposed taking the earliest opportunity of acquainting Mr. Thorold with her determination.

She considered herself rather as Mr. Thorold's visitor than as the guest of any other of the family; and wished to have his approbation for the step she was about

to take, without however assigning the reasons that actuated her to take it. She had frequently fancied of late that he saw more than he chose to notice, and that, though he was too generous to repent the friendly invitation he had given her, he was too prudent not to foresee ill consequences from her long continuing to accept it. In the midst of a large family, to which he was greatly attached, Mr. Thorold lived much of his time alone. His study and his parishioners divided the day, and, except at dinner, and for about an hour afterwards, his wife and children saw very little of him. Celestina was uneasy till she had spoken to him; and therefore when he rose to go for his walk after dinner, she enquired whether he would allow her to go part of the way with him, as she wished to speak a few words to him alone.

Montague blushed deeply as she thus addressed herself to his father; who led her however out of the room, and taking her
arm

arm within his in his usual friendly way, took the way towards the village street, where he had, he said, some patients to visit that evening; for he was the physician as well as the pastor of his people. After a few minutes of embarrassing silence on the part of Celestina, she collected courage enough to tell him, that in consequence of some intelligence she had learned from Mr. Vavasour, she had determined to go to London.

“Not under *his* convoy I hope?” cried Mr. Thorold, eagerly interrupting her.

“No,” answered Celestina, a little startled by the manner in which he spoke: “not by any means with him, or under his care; but with Mr. Cathcart, who is going on business of his own.”

“You know, my dear Miss De Mornay,” said Mr. Thorold very gravely, “that my house and my best advice are equally and always at your service: you may have reasons for quitting the one and rejecting the other, into which were I to enquire

enquire it would produce for me nothing but mortification. I will *not* then enquire; I will only entreat you to consider well, whither and with whom you go. Mr. Vavafour has, I apprehend, no mother or sister, and you cannot be ignorant that he has the character of indulging himself in liberties, which even in this age of freedom make him rather a marked man."

"My dear Sir," replied Celestina, "I have not the most distant idea of quitting your protection for one so little proper as Mr. Vavafour's must be, though he is the most intimate friend of Mr. Willoughby. But my meaning merely is——"

"Come," cried Mr. Thorold, interrupting her, "I will explain your meaning, or rather the meaning of Vavafour. He has been talking to you about my son Montague. He has represented the impropriety of your listening to such sort of conversation as I know Montague has more than once entertained you with. Is it not so?"

"I own

“ I own it is,” said Celestina in some confusion.

“ I do not blame him,” rejoined Mr. Thorold; “ and if his vigilance is the effect of *friendship*, I commend him. Nor do I, my dear ward, disapprove of your wishing to shun the boyish importunity of Montague. I only entreat you to reflect well on your removal, and to remember, that notwithstanding Mr. Vavasour’s intimate connection with Willoughby, I consider myself as having some claim to your confidence and as in some degree answerable for your disposal of yourself.”

“ You are very good, dear Sir, and deserve I am sure my gratitude as well as my confidence. You deserve too that I should speak to you with the utmost sincerity.” She then related to him, all that Vavasour had said to her of the reports that had obtained relative to her and Mr. Montague; and concluded by saying, that though she highly esteemed his son, and had the most grateful regard for the whole

whole family, she could not listen to these reports without concern, because they might be displeasing to him and injurious to views he might have for his son, even putting herself out of the question. "I think therefore, dear Sir," added she, "that it will be better for me to put an end to my visit for this time, and to travel into the North with a sister of Mr. Cathcart's, who is going thither: change of scene will relieve my spirits, and wandering give me perhaps a new relish for the beauties of Devonshire; where, believe me, I shall be most happy to return, whenever I can do it without subjecting my best friends as well as myself to uneasiness."

"I am vexed," said Mr. Thorold, "that the romantic temper of Montague has made this removal necessary in your idea. He goes very soon to Oxford: indeed in a few days: and afterwards, perhaps, you would find my house less objectionable. As to the gossip of the country, you are I hope too wise to mind it, and I have

have long since learned to despise it. *That*, therefore should not weigh with me at all. But in return for your charming sincerity, I will speak very plainly to you. Montague is a young man of good abilities, and of an excellent heart; but the violence of his passions keep me in perpetual concern lest they should deprive me of all the happiness that I may hope to derive from such a son: and already I have twice, with great difficulty, delivered him from engagements he had made with young women quite unworthy of him: engagements which, though he soon saw the folly and impropriety of them, he fancied his honour obliged him to keep. Another—I know not who; one perhaps not much superior to these, (as I learned by a friend who keeps a steady eye upon him,) had succeeded to the imaginary possession of his affections when he last came home. I was uneasy at it; but perhaps considered my own feelings too much and your's too little, when I saw with pleasure his instant admiration

admiration of you. I encouraged it, because I hoped, that in learning what true merit was, he would hereafter be less liable to be misled by the poor semblance of it, when aided by a pretty face, or a slender shape: at the same time I thought I had sufficiently guarded him against any excess of attachment, by representing to him your situation and convincing him it would be not only presumptuous but hopeless. I believe, however, from some late observations I have made, that I have judged ill; and to save him from maladies that might be trifling or curable, have exposed him to the severer misfortune of feeling a real passion where he can meet with no return."

Celestina could not with sincerity disclaim what she had so much reason to fear was true. Affecting, however, to believe that Mr. Montague would soon lose the impression when she was no longer present, and would find many infinitely more worthy of his affection, who might be proud

to receive and at liberty to return it, she renewed the subject of her going to London, besought Mr. Thorold still to honour her with his friendship, and promised to return to him again in the winter if no objection should arise to his receiving her. She heard with gratitude the advice he gave her about Vavasour.—“Do not,” said he, “put yourself too much in his power under the idea of his being the chosen friend of Willoughby. He is called, and I believe is, a man of honour, in the common acceptation of the term; but I am afraid there is little real honour among those who are in any respect so very licentious as Vavasour is said to be in regard to your sex; the stile in which he lives among a certain description of women, is not only the means of degrading all in his opinion, but hardens the heart while it corrupts the morals: and with all Vavasour’s boasted honour, I dare say he is a man, who, if he happened to take a fancy to the mistress of his friend, would steal

steal her affections and her person without hesitation, and suppose, that by an appeal to the sword or pistol to vindicate the wrong he had done, the action, however unprincipled, would derogate nothing from his honour."

"Sure, Sir," said Celestina, "Willoughby would not have so much friendship for Mr. Vavasour were he such a man?"

"I don't know, my dear," answered Mr. Thorold, "that Vavasour is such a man; but you will allow at least that it is very probable; and as to Willoughby's friendship, I am afraid that is no criterion of merit. The college friendships of young men—But let me not make you too much out of humour with the world, while I mean only to put you upon your guard against the evil with which it too often teems towards unprotected youth and loveliness. It grieves my heart to let you go. But—upon the whole, if you promise to write to me often—to remain with this sister of Cathcart's, who is, I conclude, a

woman of character, and to take no new course without informing me; above all, to keep yourself quite out of the power of Vavasour, and not to be introduced to any of his acquaintance by way of staying with them, unless you are very certain who they are; I say, on all these conditions I will not oppose your going, though it hurts me to consent to it."

Celestina, having thus relieved her mind by explaining herself to her generous friend, became better satisfied than she had been for some time, and found at least an alleviation of the concern that preyed on her heart, in the idea of change of place. She parted soon after from Mr. Thorold, whose business she was fearful of interrupting, and walked back towards the house, intending to open her intentions of leaving them, to the rest of the family, when they were assembled to their tea.

Montague, however, who had never lost sight of her, but had followed her and his father at a distance during their walk,

now

now hastened across the field she was in to meet her. His eagerly enquiring eyes were fixed on her face when he came up to her; but not daring to ask the subject of her conference with his father, nor able to turn his thoughts from it, he only said —“ Well, Miss De Mornay, you have left my father?”

“ You see I have,” said Celestina, smiling, “ and I have left him well satisfied with the reasons I have given for quitting his hospitable roof on Thursday.”

“ Quitting it!” exclaimed Montague, turning pale—“ quitting it! What are you going to leave us then? and before I go to Oxford?”

“ My good friend,” replied she, “ you did not surely suppose that I was to be a perpetual visitor at your father’s. I have now been here almost a month, and you must certainly allow that to be a very long visit from a person, who, till within five weeks, had not the good fortune to be known to your family at all.”

“ I know not,” said Montague, sighing, “ what I thought, or what I supposed; but I would to heaven I could forget having ever seen you, as easily as I am convinced you will lose the remembrance of me.”

Celestina, with one of those fascinating smiles which lent such peculiar charms to her countenance, now assured him that he was mistaken: “ indeed,” said she, “ I shall always remember you all, with pleasure and with gratitude.”

“ Well,” answered he, “ I thank you; and I thank you for not excepting me, and by putting us all together, shewing that you have no particular favourite in the family, but that one is as indifferent as another. But however, I wish you would not smile, for I cannot bear it.”

“ Ridiculous!” cried Celestina. “ I am amazed, Mr. Montague, that with your understanding, you give way so frequently to such absurd fits of—I hardly know what to call it—a romantic stile of behaviour,

behaviour, which you seem to think women like, whereas I assure you that to me at least it is the most unpleasant in the world."

"When did you ever see me in this romantic stile, as you are pleased to term it, with any woman but yourself?"

"I never did, because I happen not to have seen you with any other women than those of your own family: but you know that your mother, your sister and your brother, nay, even your father, all have repeatedly said it was your way with every body."

"They are mistaken however; and I own *I* have often mistaken a transient degree of liking for love, which I never felt—no never—till I saw you!

"For several virtues

"Have I liked several women; never any

"With so full soul, but some defect in her

"Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed

"And put it to the foil: but you!—oh you!

"So perfect and so peerless, were created

"Of every creature's best."

I 4

"There

“ There now,” said Celestina, “ that is exactly what I complain of: there is no rational conversation with you, -capable as you are of adorning it; but, as Arabella very truly says, you do nothing but make speeches out of Otway or Shakspeare.”

“ Arabella did not say I made speeches, but that I made love; and I make love because I feel it--feel it to an excess which is dreadful, because I know, and have known from the beginning, that it is hopeless! But as this hurts nobody but myself, I don't see why it should displease you, or why you should affect to misunderstand, or attempt to laugh off a passion, which, whatever may be its effect on me, can never disturb your tranquillity, or that of your fortunate lover.”

Celestina finding him thus serious, thought it would be better, and indeed more generous, not to pretend ignorance of his meaning, and to reason with rather than rally him; she therefore dropped the gayer tone with which she began the conversation,

versation, and said gravely—" Mr. Montague, I will not affect then to misunderstand you. I am undoubtedly honoured by your partiality, and very much concerned if it is the source of present pain to you. Let it become rather a source of pleasure to us both, by reducing it to that generous and disinterested friendship which I may return with satisfaction, and for those warmer sentiments, which you now suppose are entirely diverted from any other object, seek one who can deserve and return them, and spare me, I beseech you, the pain of believing, even for a moment, that I have brought solicitude and suffering into any part of a family to which I am so much obliged. I need not tell you my situation: you know it is a very comfortless and a very uncertain one: perhaps I may never see Mr. Willoughby again; or if I do, perhaps I may see him the husband of another. But in either case my attachment to him is unalterable; and were I sure to-morrow that we are di-

vided never again to meet, I should only think of submitting in such a way as would least wound him, to a blow, which I am sure he will not voluntarily give me, but never of running the hazard of making unhappy some equally worthy man, by giving to importunity what I can never give to love—for my heart has been Willoughby's ever since I knew I had one, and it will be his, till I remember it no longer."

Montague gave no other answer to this than a deep sigh; and Celestina pausing a moment to recover herself from the emotion her words had occasioned, went on—
 "You love quotations, and undoubtedly recollect, though perhaps from an author I ought not to quote, these words: '*Il n'y a point d'homme pour celle qui aime; son amant est plus, tous les autres sont moins.*'"

Montague now impatiently interrupted her—"You need not," said he, "thus refine on the cruelty with which you tell

* Rousseau.

me

me that you can never throw away a thought on me. I knew it before; and in the wildest paroxysms of that passion which I glory in feeling and in cherishing, I never dared flatter myself that you would. Yet—perhaps even this fortunate Willoughby himself—this happy man, who may neglect you, leave you for another, and yet still be beloved—is not more capable of an ardent, a sincere affection, than I am. *If* he leaves you for ever—good God!—Even if he entirely deserts you, you will still love him—Even then no other would have any hope.”

“None,” said Celestina, “for then I will never marry. But, my good friend, this is an uneasy subject to us both; let us then never resume it. Allow me to offer you my friendship and my esteem, and to assure you that this sudden partiality, which believe me you will soon and easily conquer, is the only subject on which I cannot listen to you with pleasure.”

L 6.

They

They were now so immediately before the parlour windows, that Montague, who saw the family assembled there at tea, dared not give way to what he felt; but asked her, in a lower voice, when she went. She told him the day after the morrow. Again he sighed; and when they got into the hall, turned towards his own little study, which was on the same floor, while Celestina went to join the party in the parlour; where she found Mr. Bettenson, who she understood was now the professed lover of Miss Thorold; and so entirely did he now occupy the attention both of her and her mother, that they hardly noticed the entrance of Celestina. She took, however, the earliest opportunity of a pause in their conversation, to signify her design of going on the following Thursday.

Miss Thorold contented herself with coldly saying she was sorry to lose her so soon; and her mother, even less civil, as her husband was not by, said—"And pray,

pray, Miss De Mornay, where are you going?"

"To London, Madam."

"To London. Bless me! and pray who are you going to there?"

"To a Mrs. Elphinstone, I believe, Ma'am."

"You believe! and pray when do you go?"

"On Thursday, Madam."

"And alone?"

"No, Madam."

"Not alone? then who do you go with?"

"With Mr. Cathcart, Madam."

"Oh! with Mr. Cathcart. And pray, how do you go? In the stage?"

"No, Madam," replied Celestina, blushing at the indelicacy with which all these questions were asked before a stranger.

"How then pray?"

"In post chaises, Madam."

"Humph! Post chaises are expensive." Here she stopped; being unable to find any other questions, or rather not daring

to ask any more, as her husband and eldest son that moment came in with Captain Musgrave. Celestina however interpreted the look she put on, as saying, "no matter how you go, so long as you do go," and again she congratulated herself on the resolution she had taken.

CHAPTER IX.

CELESTINA, finding that Montague Thorold did not join the party, constrained herself to stay with them, lest it should be imagined they were together. Captain Thorold, as if he took advantage of his brother's absence, sat down by her, and began in a half whisper to make her some of those speeches, between a sneer and a compliment, which always confused and distressed her. Soon after tea, however, Montague came in, and then, the evening being rainy, cards were proposed; to which his mother desired him to sit down; while Celestina, saying she had a few preparations to make for her journey which she might as well begin in time, went away, nobody asking her to take a seat at the card table.

She

She was no sooner gone, than Mrs. Thorold, addressing her eldest son, said—"So, Edmund, we are to lose your father's visitor at last, my dear."

"Are we?" said he carelessly. "What is her *intended* come back?"

"Oh no," replied his mother, "the young lady is going to London it seems."

"Lord, Ma'am," cried Bettenson, "I'll tell you what Musgrave and I heard t'other day; din't we Muzzy?"

"Faith I don't know whether we did or no, Jacky Boy, till you tell me what it was we heard."

"Why we heard—Lord why 'twas that night we drank tea and supped, you know, with that there family of the Killigrews—we heard that Mr. Montague Thorold was a going to be married to this Miss De Morning, and that Mr. What d'ye call him—he that was to have had her, had given Mr. Montague a living to take her off his hands."

Either

Either the purport of this speech, or the manner in which it was delivered, threw Captain Thorold and his friend Musgrave into bursts of laughter, which they very freely indulged; but poor Montague turned pale, and trembled with vexation; while Mrs. Thorold, pursing her mouth and drawing herself up, said—"Pray, Mr. Bettenson, *where* did you say you heard this story? Pray, Edmund, what do you laugh at? I say—Mr. Bettenson, pray was it at Mr. Killigrew's you heard this absurd story?"

"Lord yes, Ma'am, and upon my soul I've heard it elsewhere. Why, Musgrave, don't you remember?—why half the people at Exeter I'm sure have talked to me about it."

"I'm very sorry for it," rejoined the old lady. "People give their tongues strange liberties methinks. My son, I can assure them, will never, at least with mine and his father's consent, form any such connection. What! with a foreigner! an alien

alien as one may say! brought up upon charity, and I dare say not very honourably born, or how did Mrs. Willoughby get her so easily from her own country. People of fashion don't part with their children to strangers. For my part, I would be very civil to a young woman in distress, as 'twas Mr. Thorold's whim to have her here for a little time, but I am very sorry it has given rise to any such report, which I beg the favour of you gentlemen to contradict. A living indeed! it is very likely that Montague Thorold should accept of a living with such an incumbrance, or on any such conditions."

"But, Madam," cried Captain Thorold as he dealt his cards, "what think you if poor Montague avows his penchant for the lady, and talks of dying without her, instead of getting a living with her?"

"Think," replied his mother, reddening with anger—"why think that he is a fool, and that you are very little better for encouraging a silly boy in such nonsense."

"Nay,

“Nay, Madam,” cried the Captain, “I am sure I don’t encourage him. I was only pitying him, as one naturally does all gentle youths who are crost in love.”

Arabella, who knew that her mother sometimes suddenly threw off her every day character to appear in one far less amiable, when unchecked by Mr. Thorold, now feared that she might give way to one of these fits of ill humour, and exhibit a scene before Mr. Musgrave and Mr. Betenson which might give them no very favourable idea of the family temper; she therefore gave her brother Edmund a hint to forbear pushing the conversation any farther. He desisted; the game went in favour of Mrs. Thorold; and in the pleasure of winning five shillings, she forgot for that time the displeasure she had conceived against her youngest son.

Celestina was in the mean time preparing for her journey. She had nothing now but her cloaths to pack up; for her books and her drawing cases were at Alvestone,

vestone, where Cathcart besought her to let them remain a little longer, promising that if events were finally determined otherwise than he was still willing to hope, he would take them all from thence and send them to her whithersoever she might desire. She wished most earnestly the next day over: for she had now learned to dread more than before some extravagance on the part of Montague Thorold, for whom, notwithstanding the trouble she had received from his continual persecutions, she could not altogether withhold her pity and her esteem. In his figure he resembled his father, whom she had so much reason to regard with grateful affection; and his faults were merely those of youth and a vivid imagination. Whether his partiality to her was of a permanent or transitory nature, it was pretty certain that it now gave him pain, of which Celestina could not consider herself as the cause without desiring to alleviate or rather to end it. At supper, however, she learned, with
great

great satisfaction, that Mr. Thorold and his two sons were engaged out for the whole of the next day, and were to leave home early in the morning. She fancied, from several remarks she made in the course of the evening, that this was purposely contrived: and the eyes of Montague, though he dared not otherwise speak, told her how cruelly he suffered from an arrangement which would deprive him of almost all the opportunities of speaking to her, which her short stay might yet afford him. Though he saw that his mother remarked all his looks, and was restrained only by the fear of offending his father from openly avowing the anger she had conceived, he could not forbear watching every turn of Celestina's countenance; and, when he bade her good night at the door, sighing deeply, and saying in a low whisper—"At what time do you go on Thursday?"

"Early, I hope," replied she; and to avoid all farther questions hastened away.

The

The next day passed quietly enough: for Mrs. Thorold, sure of being delivered from a visitor who had never been agreeable, and was now uneasy to her, thought it as well to be tolerably civil to her: and Arabella, who thought very little about any thing at present but securing her conquest over the heart of Mr. Bettenson, was hardly conscious that she was with them.

Late in the evening the gentlemen returned; but Celestina had left the parlour before their arrival, on pretence of going early to bed that she might be ready the next day for Mr. Cathcart, whom she had appointed to meet her in a post chaise at six o'clock. She took leave of Mrs. Thorold and her daughter therefore this evening, who received her thanks and adieus with great formality and no kindness. Very willingly would she have escaped bidding farewell to Montague Thorold the next morning, but she feared it would be impossible: Mr. Thorold had told her he should himself put her into the chaise; and

and he always rose so early, that this, she knew, would not put him out of his way.

As soon as her window was opened in the morning, which was almost as soon as it was light, she saw Montague Thorold standing under it. He kissed his hand to her when he perceived her, and looked so dejected that she could not see him without concern. She was very soon dressed, and went down into the parlour, where he no sooner saw her than he came to her.—“You are ready even before the time, so impatient are you to leave us,” said he in a mournful voice. “Ah! Miss De Mornay! this house then will never again be blest with your presence!”

“Indeed, Sir, I hope to see it very frequently again, and shall always be happy to hear of the health and welfare of it’s inhabitants. But is your father in his study? I must see him before I go.”

“Do not, Celestina,” said Montague very gravely—“do not so industriously try to deprive me of this last poor moment.

Yet

Yet a little—and my unfortunate, my despised attachment will trouble you no more.”

“ You are mistaken, Mr. Montague,” replied Celestina. “ Any circumstance that *you* have occasion to deem unfortunate will trouble *me* long, wherever and whatever I may be: pray therefore, for my sake as well as for your own, exert your excellent understanding, and conquer this unlucky partiality towards a person, who, whatever may be her sense of your worth, or her gratitude for your good opinion, can never return it otherwise than by esteem and good wishes.”

“ I had rather you would hate, detest, and drive me from you,” cried he, starting up and going to the window: “ ’twould be less cruel than this gentle reason, which I know to be just, but which I cannot obey: and yet indeed, Celestina, I have no hope: I am not quite frantic enough to suppose there can be any for me. All I ask is to be permitted to be miserable, and that, after all, you cannot prevent.

“ Yes,

Yes, there is yet another favour I would solicit, though I know—I know you will not grant it.”

“ Any thing I can do without impropriety,” replied Celestina, “ I certainly will do.”

“ I do not know,” said he, in a depressed and solemn voice, “ what *you* may call propriety or impropriety ; but the favour I would solicit is to be allowed to write to you.—Nay, don’t interrupt me with a refusal before you hear me—to be allowed to write to you, so long as I confine my letters to literary subjects only, and that once or twice a year you would acknowledge the receipt of my letters.”

“ My dear Sir,” cried she, smiling, “ you would be weary of this project long before the first half year had elapsed. Had you never talked to me of I know not what particular regard, there might have been no impropriety in this, and I am sure the pleasure and advantage would have been wholly mine ; but after the extrava-

gantly gallant things you have said, how can I——”

“ If I infringe the articles of our agreement,” said he, “ then send my letters back.”

“ But tell me,” cried Celestina, interrupting him in her turn, “ tell me what good can this possibly do you?”

“ Good!” replied he: “ you are not yourself insensible of a tender attachment to Willoughby, and yet ask what *good* it can do to be admitted to write to a beloved object. Good! why it will be the softener, the sweetener of my existence! While I am writing to you, I shall forget that I am never to see you—I shall forget every thing but the pleasure of knowing that you will read what I am writing, that your hands will unfold my letter, your eyes pass over the traces of my pen; that sometimes I may amuse or interest you, and at others, perhaps, raise in your bosom a compassionate sigh for my silent, my unhappy love!

Besides,

Besides, I shall by that means always know where you are.

- “ Soffri che in traccia almeno
 “ Di mia perduta pace
 “ Venga il pensier seguace
 “ Su l’orme del tuo piè.
 “ Sempre, nel tuo cammino
 “ Sempre, m’avrai vicino.
 “ E tu! — che fai se mai
 “ Ti sovverai di me !” †

Celestina had no time to answer this otherwise than by saying, that if he had sagacity enough to find out where she was he possessed more than she did, who could not even guess where she might be. He answered that he could always know of Cathcart; and before she could urge the many objections she saw to his request, the chaise, with Cathcart in it, drove up to the door, and at the same moment Mr. Thorold came to them. He appeared sincerely concerned that she was going from him; desired her again to write to him;

† *Metastasio.*

K 2

and

and while he was hastening breakfast, which he insisted upon her taking before she went, Vavasour rode into the court yard, and giving his horse to his servant, came into the room also.

Celestina, who knew that Cathcart had informed him of her resolution to go, had felt some surprise that he had not called upon her the day before to express his approbation, and enquire how she intended to dispose of herself: but he was so volatile and inconsiderate, that she thought it not impossible but that he might have forgotten on Wednesday what he so vehemently urged on Monday; and she now rather wished he had, as she saw Mr. Thorold was very little pleased either with his present visit, or the manner in which he addressed her, without taking either of him or his son quite so much notice as the laws of civility required.

Celestina had frequently remarked the extreme inattention and disregard, which, as Vavasour felt, he never chose to take
the

the trouble of concealing, for the opinions of those to whom he was indifferent; and he was indifferent to three fifths of the world, and not very solicitous about the rest, unless for a few, a very few friends, whom he loved. He disliked the Thorolds, without knowing or enquiring of himself why he disliked them; and eager and solicitous only about Celestina, he hardly gave her time to address herself to them, or returned their invitation to partake of their breakfast by the usual speech. A party who seemed so little pleased with each other, Celestina thought could not too soon separate: she therefore hastily drank her tea, and telling Cathcart she was ready, she gave the elder Mr. Thorold her hand, and thanked him, not without emotion, for all the kindness he had shewn her: she then wished Montague Thorold health and happiness, desired him to offer her compliments and acknowledgments to his mother, sister, and brother, and then Mr. Thorold leading her, and Montague

walking silently on her left hand, she went out and stepped into the chaise.

Cathcart followed her, and Vavasour went round to speak to her at the opposite side. "You did not wish me good morrow," said he, "and therefore I suppose you foresee that I intend going with you part of the way."

Celestina had no time to answer; for Mr. Thorold offering his hand once more to bid her adieu, she gave it him, saying— "Adieu! dear Sir; a thousand and a thousand thanks and good wishes." Montague, who stood by his father, at that moment caught her eye, and there was on his countenance an expression of sorrow which affected her so much, that under the sudden impulse of concern and pity, she held out to him the hand his father let go.—"Farewel, Mr. Montague," said she. He seized it eagerly, and held it as if he would never part from it more: but Cathcart at that moment bowing to the gentlemen and bidding the postillion drive on,

on, he was compelled to release it, though it was with a sigh as if his heart was half broken; and when the chaise drove off, instead of following it with his eyes, he turned away and went into his own room, unable either to see Celestina go or Vavasour following her.

The concern she felt for him kept her silent the greatest part of the way to the cottage near old Winnington's, where Jessy was to meet them. Cathcart, who was unhappy at the necessity of parting from his wife, was not disposed to interrupt her; and though Vavasour now and then rode up to the door of the chaise and talked, she was not in spirits to answer the gay nothings with which he addressed her. The meeting with Jessy was more in unison with her feelings. Jessy threw herself into the arms of her benefactress, from whom she had been so long divided, and who she now saw only for a moment before they were to be separated for a yet longer time. Neither of them could say much,

for their hearts were full: but had they been disposed for conversation, Vavasour, who felt only pleasure in having got Celestina away from the Thorolds, was very little inclined to give them an opportunity: but in his rattling way rallied Jessy, and then Celestina, whom he teased about Montague Thorold and his father, one of whom he called her pedant and the other her priest, till she was half angry. Cathcart at length, however, prevailed upon him to leave the friends alone; and as they walked together before the door of the cottage, he enquired whether he had any commands in London. "Oh none, I thank you," replied Vavasour, "for I shall be there myself almost as soon as you. Pray where does Miss De Mornay intend to lodge?"

Cathcart declared himself entirely ignorant; and then, for the first time, from some expression or look of Vavasour's, he suddenly entertained a notion that there was something more than friendly solicitude

tude for Willoughby's betrothed wife in the eager and assiduous attentions of Vavasour; and he determined from that time to remark more narrowly his behaviour to her.

"You do not intend to set out for London to-day, Sir?" enquired Cathcart.

"Yes, I do," answered Vavasour: "that is, I just ride back and make my bow to those honest humdrum Cranfields, and then I am off for Oakhampton, where I've told them I have business, and from thence I shall take four horses, and so come up with you, my good fellow, and your fair *compagnon du voyage*, before you reach Honiton."

"And does Miss De Mornay know of your intentions, Sir?"

"No; for I know what scalping savages all the people about here are; and though there can be nothing you know in my attending her on behalf of Willoughby, yet on her account one would not set the clacks of the old cats within twenty miles.

round at work about it, and so I have made up a story of having a lawyer to meet about the affairs of my deceased aunt, who, luckily for the honour of my veracity, had a farm or two near Oakhampton, which are now mine; and I intend the Cranfields, good matter of fact souls, shall fancy me carefully looking after my property and settling repairs and renewals with Mr. Palmer the attorney."

"You intend, no doubt, to tell Miss De Mornay of it, however, Sir?"

"Oh! yes, now I see her safely out of the hands of her confessor, or else perhaps he would have put it into her head that I am not a fit escort for her; though I think, Cathcart, thou art so grave and sage that thou'lt make as proper a third to our party as his reverence himself. Come never look so calamitous, but go and take leave of thy weeping wife, and let me and Celestina have a little conversation."

Cathcart then went into the house, and Celestina presently afterwards came to Vavasour,

vafour, who continued walking before it.
“ Has Cathcart told you my plan ?” said he, before she could speak. “ I intend to go to London with you from Honiton, where I shall be almost as soon as you.”

Celestina now recollected all Mr. Thorold had said to her ; but the great friendship which had for so many years subsisted between Vavafour and Willoughby, and the undefigning openness of Vavafour’s character, put all the suspicions he had raised to flight, even when this scheme seemed most strongly to corroborate those suspicions. “ I had much rather you would not join us,” said Celestina, “ because, though I should certainly be glad of your company as well as Mr. Cathcart, yet perhaps a thousand ill natured things may be said about it.”

She was proceeding, when Vavafour interrupted her. “ Yes, that’s just the politics you have learned at the Thorolds. What does it signify to you what any body says or thinks but Willoughby, and you

know that he would put you himself into my protection on every occasion where he could not protect you himself. Come, come, Celestina, acknowledge that your old Mentor has been warning you against having any acquaintance with such sad young rakes as Vavasour.

“If you think so,” replied Celestina, “you undoubtedly know that he has reason for his precaution; and as for his calling you what I always fancied you rather piqued yourself upon being, I don’t see why my Mentor, as you term him, should give you offence by that.”

“Rake as I am, however,” answered he, “curse me if I would do a dishonourable thing towards George. No, by heaven, not if I were dying for love of you.”

“I believe you, indeed,” said Celestina; “and such perfect confidence I have in your honour, that I should trust myself with you as with a brother.”

“And never, your dear candid angel,” interrupted he, “never shall you repent that

that confidence. But I tell you very plainly, that though I am upon honour with Willoughby I am not so with those Thorolds, and can allow nobody else to usurp that favour, which perhaps I might have taken it into my head to dispute even with my friend George himself if he had not made out a very early and almost an hereditary claim to you: as it is, however, I have no pretensions for myself, but I am confoundedly jealous for him; and now I have got you out of the way of that prating, piping, poetical pedant—that Montague Thorold, I shall be quite easy when I see you situated where you are not very likely to meet with him again: so you won't oppose my meeting you on the road; and, till then, my sweet friend, adieu!" He then, without waiting for an answer, ran to his horse, which his servant was leading about, and mounting it, was out of sight in an instant. Cathcart and Jessy then came towards Celestina; and the latter hanging on her neck, could hardly prevail on herself to bid her
farewel;

farewel; while Celestina, melting into tears, kissed her, and willing to shorten a scene so uselessly painful, stepped into the chaise, where Cathcart, having taken again a tender leave of his wife, immediately followed her, and they took the road that led across the commons to the turnpike.

C H A P.

CHAPTER X.

THE road they were travelling led along the side of Alvestone Park for near a mile and a half. Celestina had never passed it before, but on the day when Mr. Thorold had taken her to his house; and then she had been so lost in mournful contemplations as hardly to notice whither she went. Now, however, the profound silence she had fallen into on parting from Jessy, was suddenly broken by an exclamation; for on looking up, she saw one of the park gates, and cried—"Alvestone! is it not?—oh! yes, I see it is: there is the house!" Cathcart answered that it was; and after another short silence, Celestina said—"To any body but you, Cathcart, I should be afraid of betraying my weakness;

ness; but you are now in place of a brother to me, and knowing my situation, will indulge my regret: I have a strange fancy to get out and go up to that tuft of beech-trees on the brow of the hill. It is not far: I shall not be gone long. Will you wait for me?"

"My time is your's," replied he. "But will you allow me to observe that it is perhaps wiser to endeavour to conquer this useless regret than to indulge it?"

"I know it would be wiser," answered Celestina: "but alas! we are not always able to be wise. I think I shall be easier when I have once more taken, of that spot where I have often been so happy—a last adieu!"

"Heaven forbid it should be the last," cried Cathcart, as he assisted her to leave the chaise. "I foresee many, many happy days for you yet, when you will be mistress of that house."

"Ah! dear Cathcart," returned Celestina, half smiling through the tears that filled

filled her eyes, "how happy a convert shall I be to the doctrine of second sight if your prophecy should ever be fulfilled. But no; I feel too certainly that this is the last time I shall ever behold this dear place."

She then went into the park over the stepping stile, and walking about half a quarter of a mile, reached the group of beech trees which shaded a high knoll in the park; from whence the house, half concealed by intervening wood, appeared to great advantage. It was now the beginning of May, and the trees under which she stood were just coming into leaf, while others scattered over the park were many of them of the most vivid green, contrasted by the darker shade of fir and cypress mingled among them. One of the trees of this clump was marked by Willoughby with her name, his own, and his sister's, and the date. It was five years since; and the bark had grown rough and knotted round the scars, but the letters still remained. It was to re-visit this well known
memorial

memorial that Celestina had been anxious; and now she could hardly bear the thoughts of leaving it. She recollected every trifling circumstance that happened when Willoughby cut those letters: the cloaths he wore, and his very look, were again present to her; while in the breeze that sighed among the trees she fancied she heard the sound of his voice, and that he pronounced the name of Celestina. In this state of mind she had almost forgotten that Cathcart waited for her; till a herd of deer ran bounding by her, and looking up, she saw following them in mimic race, several horses which grazed in the park. There was among them a favourite little mare, which Willoughby had been fond of from a boy: it had always carried him to Eton, and been the companion of all his boyish sports; and when it became old, had been turned into the park in summer, and carefully sheltered in winter. While Mrs. Willoughby lived, it had been accustomed to be fed with bread once or
twice

twice a day from her hand, from her daughter's, or Celestina's; and since her death the old servants in the house, with whom it was a sort of cotemporary, had accustomed it to the same indulgence; to which it had become so habituated, that on sight of any of the family it went towards them to be fed. This creature therefore no sooner saw Celestina's clothes fluttering among the trees, than it left its companions, and came neighing towards her.

Celestina fancied the animal remembered her. She caressed it fondly, and with tears in her eyes, and a deep sigh, cried—"Ah! Fanchette, you recollect then your old friend, when perhaps your still beloved master is trying to forget her, and may already have succeeded but too well." She found herself too much affected with this idea, and turning her swimming eyes towards the house, the contrast between what she now was, and what hardly a month since, she expected to be—the fearful apprehension that Willoughby had suddenly

denly become a convert to avarice and ambition, and that Miss Fitz-Hayman, who had the power to gratify both those passions, would soon possess the place where she had fondly hoped to constitute the happiness of *his* life whose happiness was dearer to her than her own—all crowded with cruel force on her mind; and feeling her sensations become more and more painful, she tore herself from the spot which had so forcibly presented them, Fanchette still following, and importuning to be fed. She walked slowly towards the park gate, and saw Cathcart, who began to be uneasy at her stay, coming to meet her. He understood the nature of her sensations too well to make any enquiries; but offering her his arm, in silence led her towards the chaise. Before she ascended the steps of the stile, she turned once more to look at the horse; kissed the sensible animal as it licked her hands; and pronouncing a half stifled and tremulous “adieu Fanchette!” she got as hastily as she

She could into the chaise, and desired Cathcart to order the postillion on quickly. "Since I must go," said she, "I would be soon out of sight of this place, for I find I cannot bear it."

"I feared indeed," replied Cathcart, "it would too much affect you."

Both then returned to their former silence; while Celestina, as her thoughts went back to past pleasures, and as her heart felt all the bitterness of disappointed hope, indulged herself without restraint in the sad luxury of sorrow. She no longer saw the objects she passed, or thought of whither she was going: but Alvestone was still present to her eyes, and she saw Willoughby wandering among its shades as if looking for lost happiness, and returning discontented to his house; whence the sullen magnificence and arrogant superiority of his haughty heiress had driven all domestic comfort. She heard him sigh forth too late his regret, and lament that for advantages he could not enjoy, he had relinquished the
compe-

competence he might have possessed, with the tender attachment and grateful affection of his Celestina. Tears fell slowly down her cheeks as these distressing images presented themselves, and insensibly the tender adieu she had taken of the place, the tender wishes she had formed for the lamented friend and lover to whom it belonged, arranged themselves into verse, and produced the following

S O N N E T.

Farewel ye lawns! by fond remembrance blest,
 As witness of gay unclouded hours,
 Where, to maternal friendship's bosom prest,
 My happy childhood past amid your bowers.
 Ye Wood-walks wild! where leaves and fairy flowers
 By Spring's luxuriant hand, are strewn anew;
 Rocks, whence with shadowy grace rude Nature lours
 O'er glens and haunted streams!—a long adieu!
 —And you!—oh! promis'd *Happiness!* whose voice
 Deluded fancy heard in every grove,
 Bidding this tender, trusting heart rejoice
 In the bright prospect of unfailing love:
 Tho' lost to me—still may *thy* smile serene
 Bless the dear Lord of this regretted scene.

This

This disposition of mind, mournful as it was, afforded Celestina so much melancholy indulgence, that it was very reluctantly she was roused from it by their reaching Honiton; where she was glad to find Vavasour not yet arrived: for though she was sensible of the friendly interest he took in whatever related to her, and imputed it to no other motive than regard for Willoughby, and pity for her own situation, there was an impetuosity in his manner, and a freedom in his discourse, which, though it did not offend her because she knew it was his usual way with every body, was yet often oppressive to her, and since Mr. Thorold's caution, had become more so than before. She observed too, that Cathcart was not pleased at his purpose of accompanying them to London, and had expressed more than once, in the little conversation they had together during their journey, his hope, that she would find his sister, Mrs. Elphinstone, such a companion as might engage her to continue with her.—

Celestina,

Celestina, who was, perhaps, a little too fastidious in the choice of her company, from having in her early years had her taste set very high by Mrs. Willoughby, was become generally indifferent now, from the little expectation she formed of being gratified, and though her overcharged heart languished for the soothing pleasure of unburthening itself to such a friend as the simple and sensible Jessy, she knew it was very improbable that any one whom she might meet should replace her. She answered Cathcart, however, that she doubted not Mrs. Elphinstone's merit, since she was his sister, and was greatly prejudiced in her favour by Jessy's account of her. "But, my dear Sir," said she, "it is I who have the greatest reason to doubt of my reception, and I have thought since; the plan we hastily formed a very wild one. Mrs. Elphinstone, occupied by her family, may have as little occasion for a companion as taste for an intruder into her domestic circle; and she may perhaps, on your recommendation,

mendation, accept, what her own inclination may be averse to receive. Besides she has a husband, of whom I know nothing, and to whom the presence of a stranger, when he expects only his wife and family, may be disagreeable. I own I have thought of a journey into the North with more pleasure than any thing else can now give me, for it is the only part of this island I have not seen something of, in those summer excursions which my dear Mrs. Willoughby was fond of making. But with whatever satisfaction my fancy has dwelt upon it, I ought not to think of it farther, at least till I have seen your sister."

Cathcart repeated again and again his assurances of the happiness her company would bestow on his sister, and continued to lay plans for the accommodation of their journey: while Celestina could not but think with internal anguish on her very forlorn situation, compelled to solicit the friendship and protection of strangers, or remain alone, unfriended and unprotected.

She blest, however, again the fortunate chance that had brought her acquainted with Jessy and Cathcart, without whom her condition would be yet more desolate; and for once saw evidently the lasting good that had been produced by a transient evil, the troublesome impertinence of Mr. Jedwyn.

As they arrived at Honiton sooner than they expected, Celestina proposed going on as far as Axminster, nine miles further, before they dined. To this Cathcart consented; hesitating however a moment whether they ought not to wait for Vavasour. Celestina seemed averse to it, and said if there was any rudeness in their going on without him, she would herself be answerable for it.

They proceeded therefore to Axminster, and were just set down to their dinner, when Vavasour, at the expence of almost killing the four horses which drew him, arrived.

His volatile humour never forsook him, and he seemed now unusually disposed to
indulge

indulge it. He gave the most ludicrous account of the manner in which he had missed the curiosity of Mrs. Cranfield, by setting out very gravely for Oakhampton; and then cried—"Oh! and I tell you who I met as I rode back to Cranfield's; your languishing lover, Montague Thorold, looking, poor dog! so distanced and so dismal: he was composing, I fancy, an elegy on your departure, for I rode almost against him in the cross lane that leads from old Thorold's grounds towards Cranfield Hall, and he had a paper in his hand, on which he was so intent that he did not see me, till I awakened him with a ho hoop! ho hoop! as if I had been in at the death. He started, and I was afraid, as I might have spoiled a thought, that he would feel some poetical indignation; but instead of that, he popped the paper into his bosom, as if he feared I should have seized it, and then, with as much humility as if I had been the head of his college, he pulled off his hat, and professing himself

L 2

glad.

glad to see me, enquired where I had left you. I told him on your way to London, and that I was going back to Cranfield's; and we parted with the utmost politeness."

Celestina, who had really a friendship for Montague Thorold, could not hear of his anxious solicitude for her without a mix'd sentiment of regard and concern, which, as her face expressed every emotion of her heart, was immediately perceived by the quick and penetrating eyes of Vavasour. He did not spare her; but rallied her with more success than politeness on the influence this college lad, for so he chose to term him, had obtained over her. "Upon my word," said he, "I shall think it necessary to put Willoughby upon his guard a little."

"And how do you know, Sir," answered Celestina, "that Mr. Willoughby will thank you for it? or, that admitting Mr. Montague Thorold was really more to me than a common acquaintance, which you do not seriously believe, how are you
sure

sure that your friend would not be rather pleased, that the affections he may wish to be troubled with no more, are transferred to another?"

"Transferred!" exclaimed Vavasour. "You admit then that such a transfer is probable?"

"Not probable at all: but certainly it would with most people be possible."

"And if it were with you, I am convinced that Montague Thorold is not the man to whom Willoughby would wish them to be transferred."

"He could, however, have very little pretence, after having resigned them himself, to dictate to whom they should be given. But of what use, Mr. Vavasour, is all this argument? Whether I shall ever see Willoughby again, or no is very uncertain: but it is very certain that if I do not, I shall never marry at all."

Vavasour saw he had gone too far; and Cathcart at that moment returning to them to say the chaises were ready, the conver-

sation dropped for that time; Celestina peremptorily resisting the efforts Vavasour made to induce her to go at least the next stage, in the chaise with him.

They reached Dorchester that evening; and Celestina, after a slight supper, complained of being a good deal fatigued with her journey, and going as soon as she could to her chamber, left the two gentlemen together.

Vavasour, naturally unreserved, even to indiscretion, and seldom taking the trouble to conceal his sentiments, was totally off his guard when he had drank five or six glasses of wine; and since Willoughby, who alone had the power to restrain any of his excesses, had been less with him, he had accustomed himself to take more than double that quantity when he either dined or supped. Celestina was no sooner gone therefore, than he ordered in another bottle of claret, and before it was finished, he had told Cathcart without reserve all that he thought. Taking occasion to toast
Celestina,

Celestina, he said—"Tell me, Frank! what do you think of her? Is she not a charming girl?"

"Most undoubtedly," replied Cathcart, "she appears so to me, who know that her very lovely person is the least of her merit; to me, who owe her more than life, and who throughout mine shall have reason to bless the hour that first threw my Jessy in her way."

"Yes, by heaven," cried Vavasour, "she is an angel, and I cannot for my soul guess at this strange mysterious business of George's leaving her: for though it is a desperate undertaking for a man to marry at all, yet he had got over that, and doated upon her to a degree that I never imagined possible till I saw them together. I cannot understand it; and the more I think about it, the more incomprehensible it becomes. Tell me, Cathcart, do you think he will now ever marry her?"

"My dear Sir," replied Cathcart, "I

can only say with you, that the more I think, the less I comprehend of the affair."

"I'll tell you, Frank: I am pretty well persuaded that he never will marry her; nay, that he has made up his mind to tie himself to the fifteen thousand a year, and the Viscount's title, which are the appendages of his cousin: yet why, unless he had fully determined against all the temptations that match offered him—why carry matters so far with Celestina? and who the devil could those two women be who it seems put the matter by and sent him off in such a hurry?"

"I never could find out," replied Cathcart. "He was himself the only person who knew, and of him, as he avoided all explanation, I could not enquire."

"What! did you never ask whether they were young or old?"

"I asked; but the people hardly saw their faces. They came in the evening, and went away in the middle of the night; but

but from the little information I could make out, neither of them appeared young."

"I should have thought, (for you fellows that affect principle are not always to be depended upon,) that George had got into some silly scrape or other with some wench that he might have promised to marry: but any such entanglement might have been easily got rid of, without his flying away from Celestina or even from his country. Well! there is no making it out: but I believe it is clear enough that Celestina will now never be *his* wife, and that being once ascertained, Cathcart, do you know she is the only woman upon earth whom I shall ever think of making mine?"

"Your's, Sir!" exclaimed Cathcart.

"Aye, mine, Sir. I own 'tis rather extraordinary that even my divine Celestina should make *me* meditate on matrimony; but such a wonder was worthy of her only, and she has effected it. I never was uneasy half an hour in my life about any

L 5

woman

woman till I saw her at Alvestone, or rather till I became acquainted with her; for I have seen perhaps handsomer women, or at least those that were at first view more striking. Faith I found myself growing so cursed foolish about her, that supposing her then to be on the eve of marriage with my friend George, I thought it best to fly for it, and by going back to my old haunts—you know my way—I got her out of my head a little, and could have seen her Willoughby's wife coolly enough; but the moment I heard he had left her, this confounded love, I suppose you call it, began to play the devil with me again, and I could not be easy, knowing the folks she was with, without coming down to see after her. However Captain Thorold, (it was that puffing fellow I was most afraid of,) had not, I believe, the least interest."

"Nor will any man have it, I fancy," replied Cathcart: "at least I am sure that nothing less than the certainty of Mr. Willoughby's marriage with another, would
for

for a moment detach her from the invariable affection she has for him. I even question if that would make any alteration in her heart, though it might in her prospects."

"Pooh, pooh," cried Vavasour, "you have not studied women I find. Celestina has too much spirit and too much sense to mope away her youth and beauty, and dwindle into the neglected ugliness of ancient maidenhood, because Willoughby did not know his own mind. Her pride, and she is not without it, will help her to get the better of an attachment which will only be a source of mortification to her. No, no, let me be once sure that Willoughby gives her up, and I don't think it very presumptuous to say, that in a fortnight afterwards I carry her, to Ortneybury, Mrs. Vavasour."

"Till then, however, Sir," said Cathcart—"till you are quite sure that all is at an end between Mr. Willoughby and Miss De Mornay, you will of course hold it a

point of honour not to declare your intentions. It will distress her extremely if you do. For thinking of you as I know she thinks, she will conclude you are very certain that all ties are dissolved between them, or you would not address her in a way, which, while those ties are undissolved, she will call a breach of honour towards your friend."

"Aye, that's all very true," replied Vavasour. "But let her take care then how she shews a disposition to favour that sucking parson—that Montague Thorold. Though I'm willing to allow Willoughby the preference, I am by no means disposed to give the pas to such a green horn as that: and to tell you the truth, Frank, if I were sure she preferred him I might commit some d—d folly or other."

"Well, Sir," cried Cathcart, rising to wish him good night, "she is not likely to be in his way; and if she were, I am very certain Mr. Willoughby has nothing to fear from him; and as to yourself you
know

know, you agree, that while *he* is in question *you* are entirely out of it."

Cathcart then left him to finish another bottle alone, and carried with him no very agreeable reflections. Notwithstanding all that had passed he could not divest himself of the hope of seeing Celestina united to Willoughby, whom alone he thought worthy of her. His own competence and happiness, which they only had given him, would, he felt, be incomplete if both or either of them were unhappy; and unhappy he thought they must be if they lived not for each other. Whatever scheme therefore interfered with a union he so much desired, he felt as a sort of injury to himself; and though the extreme good humour, generous spirit, and gay temper of Vavasour, made it impossible to dislike him, Cathcart was convinced, from the little he knew of his manner of life and his very free principles, that were Willoughby wholly set aside, he was a man with whom the sensibility and purity of mind of Celestina

tina would never allow her to be happy: he foresaw, therefore, nothing but uneasiness for her in his intended pursuit of her, and thought with redoubled anxiety of her situation.

As early the following morning as Vavasour could be prevailed upon to move, they renewed their journey; and about six o'clock that evening, having taken leave of Vavasour in Piccadilly, (who took Cathcart's directions, in order to be with them the next morning,) Celestina was set down at the lodgings Mrs. Elphinstone had removed to in Suffolk-street, Charing Cross.

CHAPTER XI.

CATHCART had given his sister notice of the arrival of Celestina, and therefore the joy with which Mrs. Elphinstone received her brother and the lovely person to whom he had been so much obliged, was unallayed by the surprize she might have felt at the unexpected entrance of a stranger.

Celestina was extremely pleased with her new acquaintance, and very soon forgot that she saw her for the first time. Her figure was very tall and thin, and would have had as much dignity as symmetry, but that an habitual though slight stoop seemed to bespeak oppression of spirit and the weight of many sorrows. Her face very much resembled that of Cathcart; but the bloom of

of youth and the glow of health were gone : still it was interesting, though languid and faded. Her eyes were eminently beautiful ; and there was an air of mild resignation over her whole countenance particularly touching, which, even in her most cheerful moments, bespoke her rather studying how to bear the evils she seemed to foresee, than capable of enjoying the passing pleasure. Sorrow had left on her expressive features marks of it's cruel power, and had anticipated the hand of time : for though she was not yet thirty, she appeared four or five years older ; and her dress offered nothing to undeceive the imagination, for it was so plain that nothing but it's extreme neatness and finer linen distinguished her from women in the humblest rank of life. Her manners, however, would, in any dress or any situation of life, have marked her for a well-educated woman ; and her voice was particularly pleasing to Celestina, who had been wearied by the harsh monotony of
Mrs.

Mrs. Thorold or the affected lisp of her daughter.

Celestina had not been an hour in company with Mrs. Elphinstone, before she not only determined on going to Scotland with her if it were practicable, but felt so uneasy in the fear of a disappointment that she wished to have it immediately discussed. Cathcart, who easily understood her, then began to talk the matter over with his sister, and found, that from the hint of it which he had before given her, she had been assiduously removing every objection that could arise. She answered for Mr. Elphinstone, whom Cathcart had before described to Celestina as good natured even to a fault, and so fond of society as to have owed great part of his misfortunes to a passion for it; and Celestina, willing to be convinced of what she wished to believe, no longer hesitated. Nothing then remained but to prepare for their departure, which was fixed to be at the distance of two days. Cathcart undertook every preparation; and
having

having settled every thing as far as it could be that evening, he took leave of Celestina, for whom Mrs. Elphinstone had procured an apartment in the same house, and went to a coffee house, where he had bespoke a bed, promising to be with them the next morning.

Celestina early on that morning arose to write the letter she had long meditated to Willoughby. She was now able to give such reasons for her quitting Mr. Thorold as he could not disapprove; and though he might perhaps think her present plan a strange one, he would be easy, she thought, in the reflection that it was attended with no personal danger and that she was with Cathcart's sister. One only objection now struck her, and that was the length of time which must elapse before she could receive his letters: but on the other hand, if the strange obstacles to their meeting remained, it was uncertain whether he would write to her; and if they were removed, she hoped that he would fly to her
with

with equal eagerness whether she was in Devonshire or in the extreme parts of Scotland. She collected, therefore, every thing her tenderness suggested to make Willoughby easy about her if he still loved her, and was shedding involuntary tears over that painful doubt, when, as she had just concluded her letter, Vavasour very abruptly entered the dining room, where Mrs. Elphinstone had not yet taken her seat, being detained by the care of her four children, whom she attended to entirely herself.

Vavasour entered with the gay confidence of a welcome visitor; but was a little disconcerted by the languid coldness with which Celestina received him, and by the air of melancholy she assumed, and the traces of recent tears which he observed on her cheeks. He enquired if she was not writing to Willoughby; and on her answering "yes," asked her what she had said to him of her future intentions as to residence.

"I have

“ I have told him,” replied she, “ that I am going to Scotland.”

“ To Scotland ! impossible ! you are laughing at me.”

“ Indeed I am going to Scotland,” said she ; “ and I thought you had known it.”

“ To Scotland ! No, I imagined you would take lodgings either in London or it's neighbourhood, and wait for letters from George, which must soon be here and be certainly decisive.”

“ That is by no means certain,” answered Celestina ; “ and whatever the purport of those letters may be, I may hear it there as well as here.”

Vavasour now enquired more minutely into her plan ; against which he first levelled his whole powers of ridicule, as being wild, romantic, unpleasant, and productive of nothing but disappointment and fatigue ; but finding Celestina proof against all the ludicrous lights in which he could represent it, he became serious, and vehemently inveighed against the folly and hazard

zard of a journey to the most desolate and dreary country of Britain, to reside with people whom she did not know, and who were themselves only adventurers on a wild and speculative scheme that would probably be abortive. He represented very forcibly the discomforts she must meet with, and the little pleasure or knowledge which the view of such a country could offer to counterbalance them: but she was as indifferent to local circumstances as to the ridicule of those who would, he said, laugh at her pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Columba; and he had exhausted almost all his arguments without making any alteration in her resolution, when the entrance of Mrs. Elphinstone and Cathcart obliged him to desist.

From their conversation he had the mortification of hearing that every thing would be ready for their journey the next day but one, and of finding that Cathcart never supposed he meant to object to any plan of Celestina's, who was entirely mistress of her actions.

actions. Unused to any opposition, Vavasour could hardly brook it, even from those who were his equals; and though he had hitherto behaved to Cathcart as if he had considered him as such, his spirit now revolted at what he thought the opposition of an inferior and a dependant. He became silent during breakfast, and was very evidently displeas'd; and as soon as he could he desired Cathcart to walk with him for half an hour in the Park. He there remonstrated very warmly against Celestina's going, and urged, among many other reasons, the objections Willoughby would make to it. Cathcart, convinced from this conversation that it was necessary for her to be removed as far as possible from Vavasour, kept his temper, and referred his impetuous opponent to Celestina herself. He went back, therefore, to Mrs. Elphinstone's lodgings to make another effort, but had the additional mortification of finding the ladies gone out to make purchases, and all his subsequent attempts that day

day to see them were abortive. The next, he attended very early at their door, and saw a chaise there, into which he found them almost instantly stepping, to dine at Richmond with an old relation of Mrs. Elphinstone's and Cathcart's, of whom it was necessary for the former to take leave; and all Vavasour's disregard for forms could not authorise his intruding himself upon them there. He called in the evening in Suffolk-street, but they were not returned; and was there again at ten o'clock, and told they were gone to bed. At day-break the next morning he proposed to beset the door, though almost hopeless now of detaining Celestina. The habits of life, however, he was accustomed to, and some additional wine drank the evening before to conquer his vexation, contributed to keep him long after day-break from being on the watch; and on his arrival about seven o'clock, he learned from Cathcart, who was just setting out for Devonshire with the two little girls and a servant he had

had hired to take care of them, that Celestina and his sister had been gone above two hours, and were probably many miles on the North road. Vavasour received this intelligence with indignation and resentment, which Cathcart pretended not to observe; and busying himself in placing his little girls in the chaise and settling their baggage, he in a few moments wished Vavasour a good morning, and left him to curse his destiny at his leisure, which he did very liberally for some moments; and then determining to think no more of Celestina, he plunged, in order to forget her, into those scenes where he was certainly not apprehensive of meeting any body like her; and with a party he formed there, he went in a few days to Ortney-bury, his seat in Staffordshire, where he tried to persuade himself that he hated and despised all modest women, and never would give himself a moment's concern about one of that description again.

Very

Very differently did Montague Thorold sustain the loss of Celestina's company, and the cruel probability, amounting almost he believed to a certainty, that he should never see her again. While he remained at his father's house, which was hardly a week after her quitting it, he fed his unhappy love by collecting many little memorials of her, which he preserved as sacred relics with all the fond idolatry or romantic passion. A cambrick handkerchief which she had dropped, marked by her own hands and with her own hair, was one of the principal of these, and in it he constantly kept folded up the sonnet, written with a pencil, which he steeped in milk to preserve the letters from being erased; a card on which she had sketched a landscape, and a profile which he attempted to make of her one evening by a shade, though his trembling hand and want of skill had deprived it of much resemblance, were added to the packet which he thus wore in his bosom, and which he

so delighted in contemplating, that he forgot all other claims upon his time ; and regardless of what his family said or thought, passed whole days alone in the fields, or when he was with them, was reserved, silent, and restless.

Mr. Thorold saw all this with great concern, but still flattered himself that absence, and returning again to his studies and his college friends, would insensibly wean him from the indulgence of a fruitless passion ; and sometimes he entertained a vague and distant hope that if Willoughby resigned all pretensions to the hand of Celestina, the merit and attachment of Montague might have a claim to her gratitude and her affection. But of this he gave not the most distant hint to his son, and parted with him without naming Celestina, or seeming to notice the state of his mind in regard to her.

Celestina in the mean time was journeying towards Scotland with Mrs. Elphinstone and her two little boys. As Cathcart had hired a chaise to carry them to Edinburgh,

burgh, where Elphinstone was to meet them, they travelled slowly; but as the weather was delightful, and her companion became every day more agreeable to her, Celestina was in no haste to reach the end of her journey. Every thing in this part of England was new to her; and since the fatal hour of her separation from Willoughby she had never been so calm as she now felt herself, though far enough from being happy. The oftener she read over the letters she had received from Willoughby, which were her constant companions, the more steadily she reflected on his principles and his character, more firmly she became persuaded that whatever was the cause of their separation, it was not owing to his preference of another, to idle caprice, or to any motive which should make her blush for his morals or his heart.

In this reliance on the honour of the man to whom her heart was fondly devoted, she found so much consolation, that she drove from her as resolutely as she could all those suspicions which had embittered her mind

on the information Vavasour had given her. She thought it very possible that the Castlenorths *were* gone abroad, because Lord Castlenorth was never well in England; and his lady, of more consequence among the English in Italy than she could be in London or even at Castlenorth, was much fonder of being looked up to there, than in being lost in the crowd of those who were of equal or superior rank at home. Their daughter too affected foreign manners and foreign sentiments; and with the figure and countenance of a coarse English female peasant, assumed sometimes the animated vivacity of the Neapolitan beauty, and sometimes the insinuating languor of the Venetian; and when in England, had very frequently declared her dislike of the people and the country, and expressed her wonder that those who could converse in any other, should use the harsh and vulgar language of the English.

That a family thus disposed should not remain in their native country, and above all,

all, after the mortification they must have met with from Willoughby's rejection of their alliance, was not extraordinary; but Celestina endeavoured to persuade herself, that though they were on the Continent it was with no intention of renewing their negociation with him, to which their pride would never suffer them to stoop; and that, though he should meet them there, it would be on his part involuntary, and only as the nephew of Lord Castlenorth, by no means as the lover of his daughter.

Notwithstanding all her arguments, however, and all her dependance on Willoughby's love and constancy, she was sometimes conscious of returns of suspicion and fear; and unable wholly to stifle the pangs she then felt, she endeavoured to think less of herself and more of others; and above all, to interest herself for Mrs. Elphinstone, who seemed every hour more worthy of her regard.

In the course of their conversation she found, that Mr. and Mrs. Elphinstone,

M 3.

reduced

reduced as they had lately been in circumstances, had once been in a very different situation of life; and she could not resist the inclination she felt to learn what reverse of fortune had thrown them into the distressed condition which Jessy had described to her, and which had made a deep and painful impression on the generous sensibility of Celestina: but however her anxiety was excited, she had so much delicacy as to avoid wounding her new friend by shewing it: unlike that very common description of people, who love to enquire into the sorrows and misfortunes of others, not with any view to relieve or even to soothe them, but merely to gratify an impertinent curiosity, and to rise higher in their own idea by the comparison, while they cry like the Pharisee—"Lord I thank thee that I am not as other men are, even as this publican."

To an heart such as heaven had bestowed on Celestina, there was something in misfortune not only respectable but sacred; and

and she behaved towards Mrs. Elphinstone with infinitely more attention than she could ever prevail upon herself to shew to Mrs. Thorold, amid all her bustle of affluence and her claims upon the veneration of the world from good dinners and rich connections.

Mrs. Elphinstone, however, who was aware that Celestina knew part of her history, was very solicitous to relate to her the whole of it; conscious that in her opinion she should lose nothing, and that Celestina had in some measure a right to enquire into the life of a person to whom she had given her confidence, and who was a candidate for her friendship and her esteem. She waited therefore a fit opportunity the second day of their journey to drop something of her family; and seeing that Celestina wished to know more, she said, smiling, —“ It is something like the personages with whom we are presented in old romances, and who meet in forests and among rocks and recount their adventures; but

do you know, my dear Miss De Mornay, that I feel very much disposed to enact such a personage, and though it is but a painful subject, to relate to you my past life?"

"And do you know, dear Madam," replied Celestina, "that no wandering lady in romance had ever more inclination to lose her own reflections in listening to the history of some friend who has by chance met her, lost in the thorny labyrinth of uneasy thoughts, than I have to listen to you."

"Well then," rejoined Mrs. Elphinstone, "you shall hear all that has befallen me, 'even from my girlish days.' Mine has been a life, not marked, I think, with any thing very extraordinary but invariable ill fortune, which, though I could not escape it, I trust I have sustained with fortitude. But here," continued she, pointing to her children, "here are my little supporters: without them, without feeling that they were a trust committed to me by heaven,

heaven, from my sacred attention to which, no personal sufferings, no care for myself, could exempt me even for a moment, I am afraid that I should have tired long ago in the rude and various path I have trod. But my exordium will be longer than my history.

“ My family are of Scottish origin. My father, one of it's younger branches, was settled as a merchant in London, and was engaged in the American trade, by which he was making a respectable provision for his family, of three daughters and three sons, of whom my dear Frank was the youngest, when the course of his business brought him acquainted with the family of Mr. Elphinstone, who had possessions in the West India islands.

“ The father of Mr. Elphinstone inherited some of these from his family, but, of a greater part, became possessed by purchases made of lands in the islands ceded to England at the peace of 1762. They at first promised to answer his most sanguine

M. 5.

expecta-

expectations ; and on the strength of those promises he quitted the West Indies, where he had lived many years on his own estate, and came to London, establishing his household in a stile of expence more suitable to his imaginary than his real fortune. His family consisted of a wife, who had never been in England before, and who brought with her all the pride she had boundlessly indulged in Antigua, five children, and as many negroes.

“ A few years convinced Mr. Elphinstone that he had reckoned somewhat too fast on his annual income ; but he was not disposed to diminish the shewy and expensive stile in which he first set out ; and had he himself thought of it, the opposition he was sure to meet with from his wife and children would have deterred him from any attempt to put a scheme of œconomy in practice.

“ His daughters were most expensively educated, and still more expensively dressed, their mother wisely making a
point

point of their being always the best dressed girls in the school to which they were sent, though among their schoolfellows there were many children of the nobility. The two boys were placed at Westminster School, where the elder was soon distinguished for having more money and less understanding than any boy of his age, and where the tyrannical disposition which he had been suffered to exercise over the unfortunate black people among whom he had passed his childhood, broke out in so many instances, that he was as much hated for his overbearing temper as despised and laughed at for his ignorance and his vanity.

“ The youngest, who is now my husband, was in every thing the reverse of his brother : open, good humoured, and un-
designing ; too gay and careless to think, too quick to learn, which, however paradoxical it may sound, is in many instances true—the boy who knows he can learn in half an hour a task which another cannot

learning it till application becomes too late. Alexander Elphinstone however was so much a favourite, that when he neglected to do his business somebody or other was always willing to do it for him; and when his father took him from school to place him at an academy where he was to be qualified for a merchant, he was as much regretted as his brother was detested, who had now acquired in the school the name of 'Squire Squasby, which he never afterwards lost.

“ It was about the year 1770, that Mr. Elphinstone, the father, in seeking for a counting house to place his youngest son, was introduced to my father. The pomp with which the old gentleman was surrounded, the high style in which he accustomed himself to talk, the detail of his estates, (though some of them brought him every year in debt,) his negroes, and his sugar works, dazzled my father's eyes, who had been accustomed only to a plainer stile of life, and less flattering views of profit.

profit. He was pleased with the thoughts of taking into his counting house the son of a man so opulent; and when he saw the young gentleman himself, was immediately prejudiced in his favour. Elphinstone was then a tall boy of sixteen: his dark complexion was enlivened by black eyes full of spirit and vivacity; and his countenance, if not handsome, was expressive of an open and ingenuous mind. The premium which my father asked was agreed to, and young Elphinstone became one of our family, which consisted of my father, his second wife, by whom he had no children, my two sisters, and myself; for of my three brothers, one was placed at the Temple, another was gone to the East Indies, and the youngest, my dear Frank, was then at school.

“ My mother-in-law was one of those common characters which are so difficult to describe unless it be by negatives. She was not ill natured; she was not a woman of understanding; she was not handsome; she

she was not young; she was not well born or well educated: but my father, who had married her to take care of his family, and to put the three thousand pounds she possessed into his business, was well enough contented to see that she did not behave ill to his children, that she brought him no more, and that she had always a plain dinner ready for him when he came from 'Change; was satisfied with going on a Saturday to a country house at Clapton, near Hackney, and receiving the visits of the wives and daughters of traders like himself; and had been brought up with no higher ideas of elegance than what were answered by their society, or fancied any superior entertainment was to be found than what she enjoyed in the front boxes at a play twice a year, or in a Christmas attendance at Hackney Assembly.

“It is true that on these occasions she loved to be fine, to wear rich silks and good lace, to clean and exhibit her mother's rose-diamond ear rings, and to wear
my

my father's picture by way of bracelet, fastened by garnets on her comfortable round arm. But these were indulgences about which he never contended; and was rather pleased that Mrs. and the Miss Cathcarts began to be considered as people of some consequence in the circle in which they moved, while he gradually obtained in the city the name of a warm man.

“ I was not more than eleven years old, when Mr. Elphinstone became a member of our family. One of my sisters was four years older, and the other a year younger; but my eldest sister, at about the age of seventeen, was married to a young West Indian, of whom my father had the care, and went with him to settle in Barbadoes. My sister Emily and I grew up to consider Elphinstone as our brother; but I soon learned to think of him with particular partiality, and to grieve at the frequent occasions which my father had to complain of him. He was wild, eccentric, and ungovernable: sometimes rode away to races
when

when he ought to have been settling with the grocers, (for my father was now deeply engaged in the West India trade,) and sometimes got into scrapes with his old schoolfellows, and was found at the watch-house instead of the counting house; or if he attended those solemn meetings at which the price of freight or the quality of Osna-burghs was discussed, he turned the venerable persons of the old merchants and grocers into ridicule; and while they thought he was making calculations, was frequently drawing caricatures of them in all their majesty of wig, upon the leaves of his memorandum book. But with all this, he was so capable of business, so ready with his pen, and so perfectly master of accounts, that my father often said he could do more business in an hour than he himself could do in three; and that if once he became steady, he would make a great figure as a merchant.

“ His father, the elder Mr. Elphinstone, found it convenient, after his son had been with.

with us a year or two, to cultivate very assiduously an acquaintance with our family. Mrs. Elphinstone, who had reluctantly consented that her youngest son should be brought up a merchant, now condescended to visit us, and in her drawling way to attempt civility. The Miss Elphinstones were directed to forget the distance between Cavendish square and Mincing-lane, and to visit us often; while we were of course mightily delighted to receive invitations to their routs, and to be admitted to add to the croud which four or five times in a winter filled their rooms in Cavendish-square.

“ Insensibly my good mother in law acquired a taste for what was then called the other end of the town; and no longer contented with the gratifications of Haberdasher’s Hall, or the Crown and Anchor, which had once been the utmost limits of her ambition, she learned to sigh for the Soho Assembly, for five and twenty tables, and

and the company of 'titled Dowagers and Yellow Admirals.'

"If this unfortunate mania seized her, it was not wonderful that it extended itself to us. Emily had a very fine voice, and the Miss Elphinstones had concerts to which she was invited. We both had learned among ourselves to act parts of plays; the Miss Elphinstones had at their house at Ealing a private theatre, and we were promoted to parts in their drama. Looking upon us as inferior to them in our persons, in our education, in our family and in our fortunes, no idea of rivalry ever disturbed this intercourse, and insensibly we passed more time with them than we did at home; whither I should always have returned with murmurs and regret, if it had not been the only place where I could meet young Elphinstone without witnesses, the only place where some folly of the moment did not seem to make him forget the preference he professed to give me.

Such

“ Such was the situation of the two families, when the eldest son of the Elphinstone’s, the gentleman who had been distinguished at Westminster by the appellation of ‘Squire Squashy, arrived from a twelvemonth’s tour in France and Italy, and with him a sort of tutor who had been sent with him at a very exorbitant salary. To all the native arrogance and invincible stupidity of his original character, this elder brother had added the pertness of fancied knowledge and the consciousness of travelled superiority; a more disgusting character could hardly be imagined. He was now not only above all the rest of the world, but infinitely above his own family: his mother was silenced by—“ Good Madam! how is it possible *you* should know?” his father, by a silent shrug of contempt and a disdain of argument; while his sisters, who piqued themselves upon their elegance and fashion, were ridiculed for being *si bourgeoise*, that they were hardly within the possibility of being made *comme*

il

il faut. As to my sister and myself, who were with them when he arrived, he looked at us once through his opera glass, enquired who we were, and hearing we were the daughters of his father's merchant and lived in the city, he never, on any occasion that I can recollect, deigned to notice us again. Unhappily, the gentleman who had travelled, and who still continued with him, saw with different eyes my poor little Emily, then not quite fifteen: he affected to be highly pleased with her singing, and undertook to give her instructions. He would teach us both French, and corrected our acting. We were invited to pass two months at Ealing, at a house which Mr. Elphinstone rented, and to which his daughters had given the name of Cypress Grove, though not a cypress higher than a goosberry-bush was near it; and there we were to act plays: in which, though the elder hope of the family declined taking a part and absented himself from the set entirely, his travelling friend, whose

whose name was Beresford, was of great consequence; and Alexander Elphinstone was permitted by my father to quit, on those occasions, the counting house stool and high desk for the throne of King Pyrrhus, or the triumphal car of his namesake Alexander.

“ I will own, that young as I then was, being not quite sixteen, my childish heart was enchanted with these amusements, especially when *he* bore a part in them to whom that heart was already so fondly attached. Unsuspecting and artless, I dreamed not of the mischief which lurked under all this festive pleasure; and incapable of thinking for myself, I was a very insufficient guard to my sister, who was still younger and more thoughtless; yet to me was she entrusted; unless, which did not very often happen, my mother left the card table to be a spectator of the amusements of the younger part of the company.

Emily,

“ Emily, however, was always with me ; but it is true that young Elphinstone was always with me too, and in listening to him, I heard not or attended not to the more dangerous conversation with which Mr. Beresford entertained my sister. He contrived most artfully to put her upon her guard against all confidence, which he knew must ruin his scheme ; and the first idea I had of my poor Emily’s misfortune, was, when on awaking one morning I found she was already risen, contrary to her usual custom. I was not, however, alarmed, till, on beginning to dress myself, I found the drawers where we kept our cloaths were emptied of every thing of her’s: even then I had only a confused idea of what had happened, ’till, in looking wildly round the room, I saw a note upon the table, which I opened in trembling astonishment, and read thus :

MY DEAR SISTER,

“ To avoid any arguments in regard to
“ a step I was determined to take, I have
“ said

“ said nothing to you that I meant to leave
“ you. I hope you will forgive it: and
“ assure yourself I am safe, and in the care
“ of a man of strict honour, who will him-
“ self write to my father; and I do not
“ know that I am accountable to any body
“ else but to him for my actions. You
“ shall hear of me soon; when I shall have
“ exchanged the name of Emily Cathcart
“ for that of your still affectionate sister,
“ Emily Beresford.”

“ My ideas were at once so painful and
so confused, that I lost all recollection for
a moment, and running down stairs half
dressed as I was, I asked in breathless agi-
tation for my sister—my sister Emily! The
servants who were up, (for it was yet early
morning,) stared at me without compre-
hending my distress; and I found nobody
disposed to attend to me till the younger
Elphinstone met me, and eagerly enquired
what was the matter. I put the note I held
into his hand, sat down in the seat of a
window,

window, and burst into tears. He saw in a moment what my ignorance of the world had in some measure concealed from me; and knowing that Beresford was the last man in the world likely to marry, he knew that Emily was lost. Neither my father or his wife were then at Ealing; and he paused a moment on what could be done.

“He then endeavoured to console and reassure me, and went to his father and his mother to inform them of what had happened. The old gentleman came to me in a few moments, advised me to go immediately home and acquaint my parents, and sent a servant for a post-chaise, in which he said his younger son should attend me. I hardly know how I left the house; but I remember Mrs. Elphinstone did not appear, and that the young ladies expressed none of that concern which I thought I should have felt for the rest, had any one of them disappeared under circumstances so prejudicial to their fame.”

The

The travellers now arrived at Stilton, where they were to rest that night. It was late, and Mrs. Elphinstone appearing a good deal fatigued, Celestina besought her to delay any farther gratification of her curiosity till the next day. She then assisted her friend in giving her children their supper and putting them to bed; and after a short repast together, they retired to rest in two beds in the same room, where the children were already asleep.

CHAPTER XII.

THE following day they proceeded early on their journey, and Mrs. Elphinstone thus reassumed her narrative.—“ In our way from Ealing to London, Alexander Elphinstone endeavoured by every argument in his power to strengthen my resolution, and calm those fears I expressed at meeting with my father and mother; who would, I apprehended, be enraged against me for a misfortune they had themselves taken no pains to prevent. This dreadful meeting must however be hazarded: I tottered as well as I was able into the dining-room, and sending for my father out of his counting-house, I put into his hands the fatal note, and informed him as well as I could of what had happened. He
was

was too reasonable to blame me for an error he had as little foreseen himself; but hastening out of the room with Elphinstone, enquired, as I afterwards learned, whether he thought Beresford meant to marry my sister? Elphinstone, with some hesitation, answered that he feared not. 'Let us then,' said he, 'endeavour to find her, and if it be possible, hush up this unhappy affair before it becomes more known.'

"Elphinstone most willingly agreed to assist him in the search, and my elder brother was sent for from the Temple for the same purpose. *His* anger and indignation were much more turbulent than my father's. He vowed vengeance against Beresford, and set out in pursuit of him in such a temper of mind as made me dread the consequence should he find him.

"To find him, however, every effort proved abortive. Among other places, my Mr. Elphinstone went to enquire for him at the lodgings his elder brother had taken in Piccadilly. The 'Squire received him

with that contemptuous coldness which he thought was all he owed to a merchant's clerk; and upon his eager enquiry after Beresford, and learning the reason of it, he said—'What a fuss is here, indeed, about a little grisette: why, one would think Beresford had carried off an heiress. Let him alone, and I dare say he will bring her back again.' His brother, enraged at this insult, spoke to him very freely, which he returned no otherwise than by calling him quill-driver, and maccaroni of Mincing-lane. The brothers parted in wrath; and the younger returned home lamenting his fruitless search, and devising new measures for the next day. These, however, were equally successful. Poor Emily was lost to us for ever; and the feeble hope that Beresford might have married her every day became fainter.

“ This unhappy affair put an end to our intercourse with the Elphinstone family, and was indeed the first signal of a long long series of calamities. I observed that
my

my father grew extremely uneasy at something that related to the situation of his affairs: he began to complain that Mr. Elphinstone's remittances fell very short of what he expected; that he was paid no interest for the large sums he had advanced for him; and while he was deliberating how to get out of the difficulties these circumstances threw him into, he received information, that Mr. Elphinstone, deeply involved before, had been overwhelmed by the expences of his eldest son, and the failure of his remittances, had gone off in the night from his house at Ealing to Falmouth, whence he had embarked in the packet for Antigua; while his lady and family had shut up their houses at Ealing and in Cavendish-square, and were gone to Bath.

“ These terrible tidings fell on my father like a stroke of thunder, and for some time he was unable to attempt applying any remedy to the evils he saw gathering around him. But from the torpor of immediate

mediate anguish, he was roused by the pressing demands of those, of whom he had on his own security borrowed money for the supply of Mr. Elphinstone. It was at a season when many months were to intervene before he could receive any remittances from his correspondent, even if his correspondent should have honour enough to send them, and bankruptcy and ruin seemed inevitable. He had however, as he thought, a friend in a very eminent banker, who a few months before, on his engaging so largely with Mr. Elphinstone, had heard some report that that gentleman, had influenced him in favour of the banker with whom *he* was connected; on which my father's friend, a man of immense property, had then written to him thus—

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ The intimation I have this day received of your connection about to be formed with Mr. Elphinstone, is the occasion of this address.

“ It

“ It would be injurious to that friend-
 “ ship you so constantly professed towards
 “ me, to doubt a moment, that, to have
 “ an occasion of serving me, would be a
 “ real pleasure to your good self. From
 “ a conversation between Mr. Elphinstone
 “ and my brother Peter, (who were ac-
 “ quainted by meeting at the house of
 “ Sibley and Co.) I am very apprehensive
 “ we run the risk of losing a connection so
 “ pleasing to me, by *his* influence and
 “ inclination to another house. Upon
 “ your friendship, dear Sir, I rely to save
 “ me from so great a mortification and
 “ concern: as I flattered myself the con-
 “ nection between your house and ours,
 “ was formed for many many years. Let
 “ your goodness towards me, therefore,
 “ prevent your other connections from
 “ breaking it; and I hope your friendship
 “ for me admits of no diminution, as
 “ mine towards you never will assuredly.
 “ My very best and sincerest wishes *waits*
 “ in the mean time on worthy Mrs. Cath-

“ cart, your good self, and every mem-
 “ ber of your amiable family, who am,
 “ my dear Sir,
 “ your most sincere
 “ and faithful friend,
 “ and obliged humble servant,
 “ TIMOTHY HEAVYLAND.”
 “ London, Jan. 30, 17—.

To this *affectionate* and *sincere* gentleman (whom my father had instantly obliged in dropping all thoughts of complying with Elphinstone's request,) he now wrote; and describing with great simplicity his present embarrassment, which he hoped would be only temporary, besought him to advance him five hundred pounds for the present demands of tradesmen, till remittances came in, and till he could obtain assistance from his other friends: to which he received the following answer—

“ SIR,
 “ Your's is come to hand. Our house,
 “ on making up your book, find they
 “ have

“ have already advanced you 216l. 18s. 2d $\frac{1}{2}$
“ above your credit. We hoped you
“ would have made this up by payments
“ forthwith, instead of asking a loan; are
“ sorry it is not in our power to comply
“ therewith. I cannot take upon myself
“ to advise them thereto, as I find myself
“ blamed for being the occasion of the
“ present advance, and, that our house
“ are uneasy at the non-payment thereof.
“ Hope you will think immediately of re-
“ placing it; and will oblige thereby,

“ Sir,

“ your humble servant,

“ TIMOTHY HEAVYLAND.”

“ The eyes of my poor father were now compleatly opened, and all the horrors of his fate were before him. Young Elphinstone, still sanguine as to his father’s property and his father’s honour, was on this occasion his great resource. He was indefatigable in stemming the torrent of ill-fortune thus brought upon us; and suc-

ceeded so well by various expedients, as to support for a while the sinking credit of the house; but seeing my father become every day more and more anxious, and doubtful about the elder Mr. Elphinstone, he proposed to go over to Antigua himself; and to this proposal added, that of marrying me and taking me with him. My father, who found his health giving way under the accumulated calamities that had lately befallen him, now thought it better to accept this proposal, and by a union of families make it Mr. Elphinstone's interest to be just. We were married then, after a reluctant consent wrung from the haughty mother of my lover, and three weeks afterwards embarked for the West Indies.

“I was not yet old enough to consider the situation of our fortune with any great concern: but I parted from my own father with a sad presentiment that we were to meet no more, and I dreaded my introduction to the father of my husband. But I loved *him*; he was the most cheerful and sanguine

fanguine creature in the world; and painted to me only scenes of prosperity and happiness, which I was well pleased to contemplate as true representations. Gracious heaven! could I *then* have foreseen all the misery that was in store for me, how should I have shrunk from a destiny so insupportable! how should I have wished that in a violent storm we met in the Bay of Biscay, we might perish.

“ We arrived, however, after a tedious passage, at Antigua; and I was relieved from the discomforts of a long voyage, to encounter, as I believed, what I dreaded more—the disdain and rudeness of my father in law. I landed, trembling with this apprehension, disgusted with every thing I saw, and overcome with heat and sickness: but the first intelligence we heard was, that Mr. Elphinstone had been dead about a week of an epidemical distemper, and that his houses and plantations were in the possession of the agents of his eldest son.

“ It was in vain that my husband desired

to be admitted to reside on one of them till he could see into his father's affairs: the people who had been plac'd there refused him any satisfaction; and it was only by applying to the Governor that he at length obtained a sight of the will, by which he found that his father had left every thing to his elder brother, and an annuity to his mother of eight hundred a year; with five thousand pounds, to each of his daughters and to his youngest son: but as the estates were not charg'd with these last legacies, nor able to pay them if it had, his nominal fortune gave him but little comfort, nor alleviated the concern with which he saw too evidently that all the sums of money lent by *my* father to *his*, were entirely lost.

“ The pain this gave him, the incessant fatigue to which he expos'd himself in going to Granada and St. Vincent's, where his father had made purchases, at length overcame the natural strength of his constitution. After we had been about four
months

months in the West Indies, living with his friends, he was seized at Granada with one of those fevers so common in that climate. An old French lady, who lived on her own estate near the lonely habitation where he was taken ill, had pity upon him, took him to her house, and by her extraordinary care carried him through the disorder: but he was very long in a state of infantine weakness, and could articulate nothing but a request that he might see his wife. It was some time before I received intelligence of his situation, and some time longer before I could get to him. The kindness of our foreign friend did not stop there: I was now in a state which excited her generous compassion towards me, and she insisted, that instead of returning to Europe in a situation so unfit for a voyage, I should stay with her till the birth of my child.

“ Poor Elphinstone’s weak condition of health indeed, rendered such a voyage as impracticable for him as for me. We accepted therefore

therefore the generous hospitality of Madame Du Moulinet, and at her house in Granada my eldest child was born.

“ During the five months we remained there, we heard that the elder brother was come over himself to Antigua, and had taken possession of every thing. We had therefore no business to go back, where we had no authority nor indeed any provision; but as soon as our hostess would give us leave, embarked again, to return to England more destitute than we had left it, and with a little unfortunate baby to share our distresses.

“ We arrived there, after an absence of thirteen months; and hastened to London as cheaply as we could, for we had very little money. My poor Elphinstone left me at the inn where we stopped, and went to my father's house. Never shall I forget the look with which he returned to me: his bloodless cheeks, his wild eyes, his trembling lips, spoke before he could utter a syllable. He sat down; looked earnestly
on.

on me a moment, then on his child, which was sleeping in my arms, started up, ran from us, staggered towards the wainscot, and fell.

“ My screams brought the people of the inn into our miserable room. They took up the unhappy young man, and gave him what assistance they could, supposing that he had fallen into a fit. After a moment he recovered his speech, and entreating to be left alone with me, told me that my father was dead insolvent, all his effects sold, and my mother in law gone to reside with her relations in the North: ‘ and ’tis I ‘ have undone thee, my Sophy,’ cried he— ‘ ’tis I and my family who have reduced ‘ thee to beggary, and now I have not a ‘ place wherein to shelter thee and this dear ‘ hapless innocent.’

“ Agony now choaked his utterance, and all my resolution was necessary to prevent his relapsing into the state he had just recovered from. Stifling therefore my own anguish, I besought him to take courage; declared

clared that I feared nothing while he was with me and well, and urged him to think of some place where we might pass the night and recover courage to encounter what was before us.

“He seemed comforted by my calmness, and recollected an old servant of his father’s who kept a lodging house in Northumberland-street. Thither we determined to go; the man was gone from thence, but some other people who let lodgings now inhabited the house: they had a bed chamber on the second floor to let; and knowing something of us, took us in.

“Fatigue of body overcame for a short time the agony of mind my poor husband had felt, he was asleep by me; my infant was at my breast; but I could not sleep; all the horrors of poverty were before me; and my agitated spirit ran over every hope which yet remained for us, but rested securely on none.

“The morning at last came; and I now desired Elphinstone to enquire out my eldest

deft brother, who when we went away had chambers in the Temple ; and to discover what was become of my dear Frank, whom we had left at school, and to whom I was always fondly attached. Poor Emily too recurred to me, but for her, alas ! I dared not enquire.

“ He went out, therefore, after breakfast, and returned in about an hour with looks that gave me no favourable impression of his success. My eldest brother, he told me, had left his chambers, and had been married some months to a young woman of some fortune, at least in expectancy, being the only child of her parents, with whom they lived ; and that her father, an attorney of practice in Warwick-court, Holborn, had taken my brother into his business. ‘ I saw him however,’ said Elphinstone ; ‘ but he received me so coldly ‘ that I shall hardly repeat the visit.’

“ My heart sunk cold within me, and I had hardly courage to ask what was become of Frank.

‘ He

‘He is at I know not what academy,’ replied Elphinstone. ‘Your brother John told me, very coolly, that though he was so lucky as to have a provision by marriage himself, it was out of his power to provide for all his father’s family; and thought it quite enough, that he had been at so much expence for Frank, who must now,’ said he, ‘do something for himself, for I cannot undertake to pay his schooling another year: and you, Sir, as it is owing to your family that my father was ruined, I hope you will now take this burthen off my hands; for my wife’s family are very much discontented at my bearing it.’

‘Gracious God!’ cried I, ‘what will become of us! Oh, my poor baby! why wert thou ever born!’

‘To embitter our calamities,’ cried Elphinstone. ‘Rather ask, my Sophy, why I was ever born, who brought them upon thee, and on that dear little victim.’

‘We had so little money left, that it was necessary to think of something directly.’

rectly: Elphinstone therefore went out again to enquire after his mother and his sisters, from some of those families who had, during their splendour, been the fondest of their society and the most frequently at their house. Among these was one lady who had always professed the greatest affection in the world for them all; never spoke to Mrs. Elphinstone but as her dear friend, nor to her children under any other appellation than her sweet creatures, or her amiable young friends. Elphinstone gave me, as nearly as he could, the words in which she answered his enquiry.

‘ Why, my dear, dear Sir, you must
‘ think how shocked and amazed I was—
‘ your poor good mother!—to be sure I
‘ had a most sincere regard for her—and
‘ your sisters too; good sweet young wo-
‘ men—so amiable, so accomplished!—
‘ I’m amazed they never married.—Well,
‘ poor things—God knows, to be sure,
‘ what is best for us:—Whatever is, is
‘ right, as Pope observes.’

‘ But

‘ But, dear Madam, I must beg to learn
‘ where my mother and my sisters are?—I
‘ am but just come from the ship that
‘ brought me back to England.’

‘ Is it possible!—Poor young gentle-
‘ man!—I’m sure I wish I could inform
‘ you of any thing agreeable. You don’t
‘ know, then, perhaps, that every thing in
‘ Cavendish-square, and at Ealing, was
‘ sold under executions, as I heard; but I
‘ heartily hope it was not so. Such a re-
‘ spectable family! and so many fine young
‘ people! and your poor good mother!—
‘ I saw her at Bath last winter, after those
‘ disagreeable affairs, and was sorry to see
‘ that she had lost a great deal of her
‘ cheerfulness. To be sure that was not to
‘ be wondered at. I told her how sincerely
‘ I wished her a pleasant voyage, poor
‘ worthy woman!’ After being compelled
to listen to a great deal more of this ful-
some cant, he at length learned that one of
his sisters boarded with an apothecary’s fa-
mily at Bath, being in an ill state of health;
and that his mother, and the other two
sisters,

sisters, finding Mr. Elphinstone, who was distinguished as 'Squire Squashy, little disposed to do them justice, had, by advice of their friends, embarked for Antigua; so that we probably passed them at sea.

“This was terrible! Every resource seemed to fail us, and in a few days famine was likely to stare us in the face. My beloved brother Frank, however, was, among all my own distresses, ever near my heart; and I determined for his sake, and because I would leave nothing unattempted for Elphinstone and my child, to go myself to my eldest brother, to implore the kindness of one, and obtain a sight of the other. I said nothing, however, to Elphinstone of this intention, fearing he might oppose it. I set forth alone, with my baby in my arms, for I could not leave it, nor could I afford to hire a coach. I rapped at the door; and enquiring for Mr. Cathcart, was told by the footman who opened it, that I might wait in the passage, and he would see. In the passage I waited some minutes, and was then told that Mr.

Cathcart

Cathcart was busy with some gentlemen, and that I must send in my business and call again.

“ Ah! Miss De Mornay, you have no relations, I think; nor can ever, nor will ever, I hope, ‘ feel how sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is’ to meet cruelty and scorn from those to whom the sick heart looks for pity and protection.

“ I was unwilling to send in my name and a verbal message, as there were people with him; I therefore sat down on a bench where porters and servants sit in those passages, and wrote with a pencil—‘ It is ‘ your sister Sophy, who cannot call again.’ This brought out the great man, for great he suddenly was become. His likeness to my father, the tender recollection that he was my brother, made me forget all his unkindness the moment I saw him, and I was throwing myself and my child into his arms, when a cold—how d’ye do Mrs. Elphinstone? fixed me to the place. I suppose he thought by my looks that I should

should faint, and was afraid of being exposed to his servants and new relations, for he took my hand, faintly kissed my cheek, and leading me into a little dark parlour where there was no fire, and desired me to sit down.

“ Some remains of natural affection, which, in a young man, is very rarely totally extinguished, seemed to be contending with pride, avarice, and mean policy, and for a while kept him silent: he then enquired coldly into our situation, and as I related it, (for he had no idea it was so bad,) I saw those affections gradually shrink from the detail: his heart seemed to become harder as it's tenderness became more necessary; and he declared to me at last, that I had formed erroneous ideas of his situation if I thought it was in his power to be of any service to me. I rose to go; but desired a direction to Frank, which he gave me very unwillingly; for since I could contribute nothing to his support, he thought it useless for me to see him.

I do

I do not now very well know how I got out of the house of this cruel brother, who never introduced me to his family, or seemed to wish to see me again: but I recollect that when I came into Holborn I became so very faint and sick, that I was obliged to get into a coach to return home, which I paid for by changing the last guinea I had in the world.

“ Ah! my dear Miss De Mornay! veteran in sorrow as I have since been, I look back with wonder on the scene I afterwards passed through; I wonder how I supported it. We lingered on for three months at these lodgings; my beloved Frank often, and always happy to be with us. He was now near sixteen; very tall and very manly, and repeatedly declared to Elphinstone that he was well able to get his bread, or to assist him in any way of business he could enter into. Business however was not to be obtained without money; but my father's creditors knowing how well Elphinstone was acquainted with
his

his affairs, engaged him to assist them in recovering debts due to him, and allowed him from time to time some very trifling compensation, which was our only support.

“ As long, however, as he was well— as long, as my little boy blest me by it's innocent smiles, I murmured at nothing; and the little time I could spare from nursing him, and after he was in his cradle of a night, I found exquisite pleasure in applying those little arts I had learned as matters of amusement, to the purposes of profit. They produced not much; but in our situation every thing was an help; and our simple meal, partly the produce of my industry, and shared with my brother Frank, after Elphinstone came home of a night, was infinitely a sweeter banquet than the insipid though splendid tables of the affluent had formerly afforded me. At length, however, the persecution of ill fortune, which seemed to have relaxed a little, began anew, and misery fell upon me

where I could least bear it. Elphinstone was seized again with an infectious fever, differing only from that he had at Grenada, in the symptoms occasioned by difference of climate. On his attendance on the creditors, our daily and scanty subsistence depended: with his confinement, every aid of that sort ceased; and I saw him languishing in a sick bed, in all the depression of a malignant fever, without the means of giving him the necessary assistance.

“ A neighbouring apothecary, however, attended him, who told me that wine was absolutely necessary to be given him in large quantities. Where was I to get it?— For the first time, I had recourse to a pawnbroker, and my dear, dear Frank was my agent: for now, attached entirely to us, he quitted his school, where, indeed, he knew more than the master, and gave himself up wholly to our service: while my brother John, not sorry to be relieved from the expence of supporting him, remonstrated,

monstrated, or rather quarrelled with him once, and, obtaining an excuse for shaking him off, saw him no more.

“ I had a watch, and a few trinkets; these were first disposed of, and then such clothes as I could spare; for I could not endure the thoughts of taking any thing that belonged to Elphinstone, though my trembling heart too often whispered that he would want them no more. Youth, and the strength of his constitution, carried him on many days through a rapid and generally fatal distemper; and, at length, my fainting courage was sustained by the hope of his recovery, when my lovely infant was seized with the same terrible disorder; and I was told, that as it was almost always fatal to children, I must not hope.

“ I know not, then, what became of me; but I think, that for some hours I was not in my senses. I recollect being seized with an earnest wish to have my child attended by a physician I had heard named, as eminent for his humanity as for his

peculiar skill in this disorder; and, as Frank was not at that moment with us, I wrapped myself in an old cloak, and leaving my poor infant to the care of his father, who was just able to sit by the cradle and look at him with eyes of hopeless agony, I went away myself to implore this physician to come to us; and had just sense enough to remember the direction I had received to his house, but none to notice the objects around me, or to care what people might think, who saw me, with wild looks and uncertain steps, hurrying through the crowd of the busy and the happy.

“ I had proceeded as far as the corner of Cecil street, when a croud of carriages and passengers impeded the crossing; I was making my way through them, heedless of the danger, and hardly hearing the noise, when a footman, in a livery glittering with lace, stopped me, and told me he was ordered by his lady to beg I would step to the door of her carriage and speak to her.

‘ Oh !

‘Oh! I cannot; I cannot, indeed,’ replied I, without enquiring who his lady was: ‘my child—my child is ill—I am going for advice for him.’ I would have passed the man; but he followed me, and pointed to an elegant vis-a-vis that was drawn up close to the broad pavement. ‘Here is my lady, Ma’am,’ said the man.

“ I looked up :—it was my Emily, my long lost, lamented Emily! I gave a faint shriek, and hardly heard her in a low and tremulous voice articulate—‘ My sister! my sister Sophy!’

“ Not quite in my senses when I left my lodgings, this interview quite robbed me of them. I caught hold of the door of the carriage, or I should have fallen in the street. Every object swam before me; and I retained only recollection enough to cry, ‘ My child! my child! save my child!’ and to hear Emily repeat—‘ What child? what can I do for you? Good Heaven! what can I do for you?’ But I was unable to answer. I found myself, however, in

a few moments, placed in the carriage, and Emily holding her salts to my nose, and chafing my temples. When my senses returned, my child was their first object; and again I exclaimed—‘ Oh! do not, do not detain me; I must go to save my child—my poor little boy!’

‘ My dear, dear sister,’ cried Emily, ‘ pray summon your recollection, and tell me whither you would go; we will drive to the place directly.’ In my anxiety for the life of my infant, I forgot the culpable conduct of my sister; and, telling her where the physician lived, she gave orders to her coachman to hasten thither instantly. A strange stupor overwhelmed me; I could not speak till we came to the door of the house: I then looked out; I would have flown out of the carriage. He was not at home: but just as we were leaving the door, he drew up to it.

“ Then my voice and recollection returned to me. I besought him most earnestly to go with me. He was that moment

ment come from his first round of visits to change his horses, and begged we would wait a few moments: but Emily urged him so earnestly to get into her carriage, saying she would take him to my lodgings and bring him back, that he could not resist her importunity. He went with us then; and so totally was my mind absorbed in the danger of my child, that I heeded not the strange contrast between my appearance and the gay splendour of my sister; I forgot what she was, and almost who she was; and only enquired, when the physician had seen my child, whether he would live.

“ I saw by his looks his opinion to the contrary; nor, indeed, did he attempt to conceal it: but he entreated me to attend to my own health, and to that of my husband; gave directions about us all, and departed with my sister, refusing the fee I offered him, and telling me he would come again early the next day.

“ Elphinstone, amazed as he was at
O 4. the

the scene that had passed, had no power to enquire the meaning of it, and I had none to explain it: all my resolution was roused to attend my dying infant; but all could not save him—he died: and I now tell it with dry eyes, though, when it befel me, I thought no blow could be so severe, and that I could not survive it:

“ For since the birth of Cain, the first male child,

“ To him that did but yesterday suspire

“ Never was such a gracious creature born !”

“ Yet I have lived now above ten years longer, my dear Miss De Mornay; and have learned that there are such evils in life as make an early death a blessing.

“ I was delirious, I know not how long, between the excess of my affliction and the opiates that were given me to deliver me awhile from the sense of my misery. In the mean time my sister sent a careful person to attend me, and saw me every day herself, though I no longer knew her, or
any

any body but Elphinstone, whose hand I held for hours, imploring him not to let them take my child from me. Emily did yet more: she supplied us with every thing we wanted, attended herself to the funeral of my poor baby, and then took lodgings for us at Kensington, that we might be removed from the place where we had suffered so much calamity. In her frequent visits she spoke not neither to Elphinstone, or Frank, unless they first spoke to her; and never but on the subjects of my health and ease. I was not yet quite restored to my senses when we removed. She sent us, by a porter, the next day, a forty pound note, with these words:.

“MY EVER DEAR SOPHY,

“ Having been lucky enough to be of
 “ some use to you, I rejoice that we have
 “ met: but now, if our future meetings
 “ should be unpleasant to you, it depends
 “ entirely on you whether they shall be
 “ repeated. Whatever may be my failings,

U 5.

“ or

“ or my errors, I trust that among them
 “ will never be reckoned, want of love
 “ to my relations, whether they will ac-
 “ knowledge or no,

“ your still affectionate

“ EMILY.”

“ As soon as I was capable of reading and understanding this, all that had passed came back to my recollection. I had been supported, then, for many days, by the wages of shame; and now had nothing but a gift from the same hand, to save my husband, my brother, and myself, from actual hunger. ‘ Oh! my dear father,’ cried I, ‘ can you forgive your unfortunate child; or rather, your unfortunate children! and ought I to refuse taking this lovely lost one, whose heart, so generous, so full of sensibility, cannot surely be quite hardened in a course of evil!’—I shall tire you, my dear Madam, if I am so minute: suffice it to say, that I saw my sister; that she owned all her guilt, and all her

her

her folly; without having the power, or, at that time, perhaps, the wish, to quit a manner of life, where she possessed boundless splendour and luxury, for such a precarious subsistence as women can earn in business. My remonstrances she heard with gentleness, and mingled her tears with mine: but she pleaded gratitude to the friend who supported her, and the impossibility of her abandoning him, or existing if she did. I was afraid of enquiring who this was; but I found that it was some man of high rank who had taken her from the worthless Beresford, and with whom she had lived ever since.

“ Her purpose seemed to be to detach my thoughts as much as possible from her situation, and to fix them on my own: and indeed it was very necessary; for we had now, in consequence of Elphinstone’s long illness, no support whatever but what her tenderness afforded us.

“ As Elphinstone recovered his health, his sanguine temper returned, and again

he formed various projects of entering into business. It was now the midst of the American troubles; and some part of my father's property, which was thought recoverable, was there. Elphinstone, who now from long habit and from his natural disposition, was become unsettled and fond of speculative schemes, proposed to the creditors to go over there in search of these sums. I was still too ill and too much depressed by past sufferings to give very minute attention to this plan: I only resolved not to be left behind, but to share his destiny whatever it might be. In a fortnight or three weeks he was every day in town, and the latter part of that time returned in remarkably gay spirits, and told me of I know not what prospects that were opening to him; to which, indifferent to every thing beyond a mere subsistence, now that I had lost my boy, and long accustomed to hear of visionary fortune, I gave very little applause, till he came home one day elated beyond what I had ever seen before, and told

told me that an offer had that day been made him to become a sort of under secretary to a man high in administration, into whose house he was to be taken; that he was to enter on his place the following week, had taken a lodging for me in the neighbourhood, and hired two female servants and a footman to attend.

“ I wondered at, and rather blamed his precipitancy; but he assured me he was right. Frank went with us, as he was to be a sort of secretary, in his turn, to Elphinstone, who was now domesticated with his patron, while my brother and I were in very handsome lodgings in Westminster. I do not know by what means the money came, but from this time it was as plenty with Elphinstone as it had before been scarce. In a few months his views were so much enlarged that he took a house for me; increased the number of his servants, and from one thing to another our establishment was at length on a footing of splendour, against which I remonstrated in vain.

He

He assured me that his future success depended on his keeping up such an appearance; that the emoluments of his place fully entitled him to it; and that I should soon see him permanently fixed in a situation, such as would put us out of the power of fortune.

“ In the mean time, as I never loved London, and as my health was very much hurt by a long continuance in it, I prevailed on him to let me have a small house at Sheen, near Richmond, where it would not be necessary, for me at least, to be always in company, which began to be unavoidable in London. To this proposal he consented at first with reluctance; but afterwards, I thought he was not sorry to have his house in town at liberty to receive the parties he now made there, by which it became distinguished for good cheer and high living. I had by this time two boys; one of whom I have since lost, and the other is the eldest of these: and with many a silent and stifled sigh I wished:

wished their father would think, while in this prosperous train of fortune, of making some provision for his increasing family.

“ He heard me always with his usual good temper, and as constantly assured me that he was laying by money every year; though I never could guess how or from whence it came.

“ Frank, however, was not only supported like a gentleman, but had really more money than, had' he been less prudent and steady, would have been proper for so young a man.

“ Of this, notwithstanding the infectious example of the people among whom he lived, and even of Elphinstone himself, he always brought a part to me to put by for him. On these occasions I sometimes questioned him of their manner of life in London, whence I now entirely absented myself; and though he gave me such answers as would, he thought, prevent my inquietude, he was too ingenuous to be

be able to conceal the whole truth. Thus my prosperity was embittered by the fear of falling again into the adversity, from which we had been delivered by miracle; and I lived in perpetual dread of evils I had no power to prevent. Alas! the greatest evil was already arrived—the estrangement of Elphinstone's heart!—I saw it in a thousand instances; but I knew that reproaches and importunity would not recal it; and I endeavoured, whenever he came down to Sheen, to appear cheerful, lest he should be quite won from me by those whom he now frequented.

“ Though he has an excellent understanding, he became insensibly intoxicated with his good fortune, and never gave himself time to think how soon it might be at an end, till this fatal period actually arrived. His patron was dismissed from his employment, and the golden dream vanished at once.

“ I then knew, that out of immense sums of money he had made, by means, of which

which I understand nothing, he had not reserved five hundred pounds; and I knew that a mistress whom he had supported in great splendour, had pillaged him of twenty times that sum. But he was now humbled and unhappy! I forgave all his failings; and should have blessed the chance that had restored him to me, had we but had a competence to live upon.

“ After all our plate and fine furniture in London was sold, and our debts called in, we found ourselves about two hundred pounds worse than nothing. But Elphinstone still told me he had friends; and now commenced a course of solicitation and attendance, to which the humblest and severest labour is in my mind infinitely preferable: and in the mean time our subsistence was derived from his writing for the papers, and now and then by an eighteen-penny political pamphlet.

“ I did not notice, that in the height of our prosperity my brother John assiduously courted our regard; and Elphinstone

Stone had procured him many advantages : among others, that of being steward to a nobleman, by whom he made a great deal of money ; so that he was, on our decline, more prosperous than ever. With our failure, however, his love failed also ; and all we could now obtain of him was, to take Frank as a sort of assistant into his business.

“ My poor Emily, who from gratitude and pity I could never wholly forsake, was at this time abroad with her friend ; and I had nothing to support me against the heavy tide of adversity but the consciousness of having done my duty, and the firm reliance on heaven which that consciousness gave me. Four years we lingered on, sometimes flattered by hope of some trifling place, and sometimes supported by small remittances from Elphinstone’s mother ; while she complained heavily of the conduct of her eldest son, who had deprived her and his sisters of every thing he could take from them.

“ Oh !

“ Oh! never may those who have it in their power to secure an independance, foolishly throw it away, and trust to the fallacious assurances of that friendship which flourishes only in the sunshine of affluence!

“ Day after day did poor Elphinstone now attend those men, who but a few months ago were his assiduous friends: many, into whose pockets he had been the means of putting thousands, now shut their doors against him; while, of those who could not so easily escape from his importunity, some blamed him for the expence at which he had lived, talked of the advantages of oeconomy, and of the demands of their own family—others very gravely harangued on the caprice of fortune, the ups and downs of the world, thanked God they had but a little, but that little was, they hoped, secure; yet most truly lamented that it was *too* little to enable them to follow the warm dictates of their hearts, in aiding a friend they so much respected and esteemed; and with
this

this sort of language bowed *him* out, whose favour and recommendation they had only a few months before solicited with meanness equal to their present ingratitude.

“Wearied at length by this sad experience of a world to which he was still too much attached, and where, from the vivacity of his sanguine temper, he was long unwilling to relinquish the hope of rising again into consideration, he took up once more his old projects of recovering the money due to his father in America: and though that country was no longer under the government of Britain, and his expectations of success greatly diminished, he contrived to persuade those persons who were interested, to furnish him with a small supply of money; and we went, a wandering and unhappy family, to America.

“I could give you, my dear Miss De Mornay, a long detail of our pilgrimage—of our being once fixed on a farm in the back settlements, and exposed to
terrors

errors from the Indians, which, with all my courage, it was utterly out of my power to support; but I have already been too prolix, and tired you with a long history of sorrow, from which your sensible heart requires some relief.

“ Alas! I cannot give it you while I dwell on my own sad story; I will therefore, as briefly as I can, conclude it, by telling you that we were four years in America, and two in Antigua; where my husband joined his own family, and tried to establish himself as a merchant. But he was, by this time, considered as a schemer—as an unlucky man—as one not born to be prosperous; and this design ended, like the rest, in disappointment.

“ I have obtained, however, some advantages by my itinerant life; I have learned resignation, and have seen, that almost every condition of humanity has evils equal to mine, though I have sometimes thought them insupportable. But in acquiring patience, hope, I own, has escaped me: nor have I now any other wish,

wish, than to see my children well, and to be able to find them bread.

“ The distinctions of rank have long since too been lost to me, who have passed from competence to extreme poverty, from extreme poverty to high affluence, and have again fallen to all the miseries of dependence and indigence. When Frank, therefore, first declared to me his attachment to Jessy Woodburn, I opposed his marriage, not from pride, but from the apprehension of redoubling his difficulties. I then, it is true, depended almost entirely on the generous assistance of that excellent brother; but, believe me, that would never have induced me to oppose what was requisite to his happiness. I had not known Jessy long before I lost every idea of opposition to it, and I wished to see them married long before I knew what favourable prospects might one day open to the object of his affection. To foresee to whom she would owe the realizing those prospects, to whom she would afterwards
be

be the means of my being known, was, you know, impossible."

"And where, my dear Madam," enquired Celestina, "where was Mr. Elphinstone at the time you speak of?"

"He was gone again to Antigua, on account of his mother's death. I was left with four children, and so little money, that heaven only knows what would have become of them and of me, had it not been for Frank."

"And your sister Emily!—I cannot help being interested for her with all her failings."

"Ah! would to heaven I knew what was now her lot! I lost all traces of her after my going to America; nor could mine or Frank's most assiduous enquiries ever since, gain any intelligence. She has changed her name, or taken some other means to avoid us; circumstances that make me fear she is sunk below her former brilliant but discreditable and destructive condition. When I think of
her

her and of my children, my stoicism forsakes me—and of her, unless I could snatch her from a manner of life so terrible, I endeavour not to think; for the thoughts of what she is, and of what she may be, I am very frequently unable to bear. You will allow, my dear Miss De Mornay, that my own situation requires all my courage. A new and perhaps an abortive project now carries me to the remotest part of Scotland—with a heart, I hope not callous, but exhausted by long suffering. My husband is amiable, good tempered, and, I believe, truly attached to me; but he is so volatile! so unsteady! misfortune has made him restless, and his desultory life increased the original blemish of his temper—a want of firmness; from which have arisen many of the evils that have pursued us.

“ One of his some-time friends procured him the little appointment he now holds, rather to get rid of his importunity, I think, than to do him real service. It may,

may, however, afford us a residence and a support, and I need not say that its distance from the scene of our former prosperity and former adversity is to me its greatest recommendation. If my husband can learn to be content among the cold and dreary Hebrides, if my children have there, health, food, and shelter, never shall I be heard to repine; and indeed my journey, in having you for my companion, begins under auspices so favourable, that my heart, dead to hope as it has long been, is yet not insensible of something that nearly resembles it."

This conversation brought the travellers to the end of their third day's stage; and Celestina, more than ever interested for Mrs. Elphinstone, forgot for a moment every thing but the series of undeserved calamities to which she had been listening.



Published by the same Author.

1. Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle. Third Edition, 4 Vols. 14s.
2. Ethelinde, or the Recluse of the Lake. Second Edition, 5 Vols. 17s. 6d.
3. The Romance of Real Life, 3 Vols. 10s. 6d.
4. Elegiac Sonnets. Fifth Edition, with additional Sonnets, ornamented with Plates, 10s. 6d.



18
1-2

